186, 728, 648, 668

✓ Syria	MD1
Israel	MF1
Jordan	MG1
Iraq	MH1
Lebanon	ME1

/For an account of the formation and growth of the Arab Succession States after World War I, the Arab Nationalist Movement, relations between the Arab countries and the great Powers, see 66: Bonné, M1 Middle East, category 116, pp. 77-87./

648 Syria MD1

[For the text in French of General Catroux' Declaration of 1941, see 57: Davis, MI Middle East, category 116, pp. 320-321.]

2: Belgrave G-3 (1945) 1946 MD1-Syria MD1

Alawite MD7

A VISIT TO SHEIKH SULAIMAN MURSHID, THE ALAWITE "LORD"

By SQUADRON-LEADER RICHARD BELGRAVE

S IN June, 1945, the Alawite province of Syria was in an explosive state.
648 To Major B—— and myself the arrival of H.M. Destroyer *Musketeer*
was welcome in the extreme. With half a dozen Signals personnel we
had been the only British "forces" in the area. No time was lost in
putting her Captain, Commander S——, in the picture, and very swiftly
and surely did he grasp the essentials of a highly complex political situation.
It was clear that we had to take steps to keep the Alawites quiescent
in this quarrel between the Syrian Nationalists and the French, or our
efforts to prevent bloodshed could not have been successful for much
longer. The story of our doings in this little-known corner of the Levant
is recounted as an example of an unusual combined political operation by
representatives of all three branches of the Service.

A The Alawites constitute a religious sect of Islam, numbering some
101 350,000, and inhabiting the mountains just inland of Syria's 100 miles of
131 Mediterranean coast. They are a minority to be reckoned with in Syrian
195 politics, as they amount to roughly 10 per cent. of the population. In the
S main division of Islam into the two great sects, Sunni and Shiah, the
162 Alawites are nearer to the Shiahs, while the great majority of the population
563 of Syria are Sunni and nearly all the Nationalist leaders belonged to
that sect. It was, therefore, inevitable that the Alawites should be somewhat
suspicious of the Damascus Government. Alawite social life is
still feudal and their religion secret: a curious blend, largely Islamic, but
deriving certain characteristics from Christianity—for example, the belief
in a Trinity—and from pagan and pre-Christian cults—for example, belief
A in reincarnation and the use of groves of trees for places of worship.
[362 Their prophets include Christ, Muhammad and Ali. Their women are
774 not admitted to religious rites and are not regarded as possessing souls.
721] The Alawites have the mountaineers' fondness for fighting, and have
A been enabled by their mountain country to preserve their identity through
622 centuries of alien rule. Their standard of living is low and all but their
[511] feudal chiefs are poor. Perhaps the most important of these chiefs at the
time of Syria's latest struggle for independence was Sulaiman Murshid,
often referred to by the Europeans as "god."

A Sulaiman Murshid has never to me claimed to be in any sense a "god."
622 On the other hand, it is estimated that some 50,000 people regard him as
735 the incarnation of the divine and can be said to worship him in the sense
554 that he is their absolute master. The Sulaiman Effendi, as he is known
locally, is a shrewd man and knew that I had stated on several occasions
that it was a "shame" for a man to pretend to any of the attributes of
Allah. He later explained to me that he was the "Rabb" or "Lord" in
the sense that he was "lord of the manor." I think, however, that he has
on occasion found it profitable to be "the Lord" in as omnipotent a

Part One

Problems of Economic Development

6. At the beginning of independence, when a Syrian Government assumed power, the country's economy was in a relatively primitive state. It was burdened by many restrictions, it faced difficult problems and it needed a great deal of care and order. The government had very little to build on, and it was faced, into the bargain, with a huge legacy of problems left to it by the previous régime. 652

7. We will first examine the problems arising from outside sources. The most important of these lay in the monetary and exchange system, customs policy, and the customs and economic union with Lebanon.

8. The monetary system was governed by a contractual agreement with a foreign bank, the Banque de Syrie et du Liban, which managed the Issue Department and which took decisions on matters of issue and credit quite independently of the Syrian Government, which thus had no power of direction or control whatsoever. Syrian currency was tied to the French franc and the greater part of the cover was in French francs. These balances were the subject of disagreement between the Syrian and French Governments, both on the question of their guaranteed value in terms of sterling and the question of their free use. Negotiations with the French Government resulted in an agreement [1] which solved the question of the guarantee and granted Syria the right of gradually liquidating the franc balances. The break of the Syrian pound away from the French was agreed to and Syria became free to exercise the right of legislating in monetary matters. Subsequent to the agreement, Syria issued a series of laws that regulated the issue of currency, its circulation and cover, and which provided for the control of the Department of Issue and the direction of the monetary and credit policies. The last of these laws was Legislative Decree No. 87, of March 28, 1953, which covers the basic monetary law and the establishment of the Syrian Central Bank. 652 648

---

[1] The Agreement of 7 February, 1949; including liquidation, settlement, and payments agreements.

652 9. The exchange system was subject to the control of the
648 Mandatory authority which directed it in accordance with its own
interests, and the exchange control was a department administered
directly by the High Commissioner's Office. In 1944 the exchange
control was transferred to a joint Syro-Lebanese committee, headed
by a delegate from the Central Exchange Control Office of
the franc area, of which both Syria and Lebanon were members.
In 1948 Syria declared its withdrawal from the franc bloc and became
652 independent in dealing with exchange questions. The Exchange
Office in Syria thus became a purely Syrian institution.
Subsequently the Government initiated several reforms that aimed
at removing war-time restrictions. The exchange system became
gradually freer and adapted itself to the needs of the Syrian economy.
The last and most important of these reforms was Legislative
Decree No. 208 of April 21st, 1952, which allowed the free entry
and transfer of capital and created conditions facilitating commercial
transactions ; it also worked towards achieving stability in
the foreign exchange rates and bolstering the cover to the currency.
In this manner the Decree inspired confidence in the national
currency and prepared the right atmosphere for the entry of foreign
capital and its investment in the country.[1]

651 10. As to the customs policy, this also was directed by the
648 Mandatory authority. It was formed by financial considerations,
the first aim of which was to cover the expenditures of the Mandate
and collect revenues for the treasury. When the Syro-Lebanese
authorities took over the customs administration, the customs
tariff and regulations moved gradually towards facilitating commercial
transactions and encouraging national industry by exempting
machinery and raw materials, needed by industry and agriculture,
from duty. However, the establishment of a customs union
between the two contries and the existence of an actual economic
union, which took the form of free movement of goods, capital and
persons between them, led to disagreements as to the customs and
economic policies that each country thought should be followed.
The disagreement reached its peak on the questions of import and
export policies and the protection of national industry, and as a
result of their faillure to agree on a common policy, the two count-

---

[1] *Vide The First Annual Report on the Activities of the Exchange Office in 1952*, Damascus, 1953.

ries separated in 1950, and, in consequence, Syria regained free- 651
dom of action in directing her customs and economic policies and 648
in managing her economy on an independent basis.

11. The new Syrian government also had to face serious internal problems, that the Mandatory power with its "Laissez-faire" policy had not attempted to deal with. No factual study of the country was made nor any determined course of economic action undertaken. The following are the most serious of the defects of the economic system at that time :

First there was a lack of statistics and detailed studies upon 659
which to base a sound economic policy. Nor were there any technical and scientific studies of the country's economic resources,
or plans for developing and exploiting them. Secondly, the bank- 453
ing system failed in meeting the country's need for agricultural 652
credit and for medium and long term credit. The majority of the banks were branches of foreign banks that specialized in commercial short-term credit operations, and which, with the exception of the Banque de Syrie et du Liban, avoided seasonal agricultural lending. All the banks operated without any control or direction. Furthermore, no bank had up to that date been established to deal with industrial or mortgage credit. There was only the Agricultural Bank, established by the government to deal with medium-term agricultural loans, but its regulations, staffing and limited means did not enable it to play a major role in meeting the
needs of agriculture. Thirdly there was no money market that 454
could attract national savings and invest them in development projects. People with savings have always preferred to hoard them in the form of gold, or else they invested them in real estate. In addition, foreign capital avoided entry into the country because of restrictions on exchange, and other reasons.

12. During the period 1945 to 1953 the government made a 656
great effort to regulate the Syrian economy in the fields of trade,[1]

---

[1] Legislative Decree No. 14 of December 18, 1951 and its amendments concern the regulation of the possession of, and trade in, raw materials and products. Legislative Decree No. 151, of March 3, 1952 and its amendments concern company law and the law governing firms established outside Syria. Legislative Decree No. 60, of January 13, 1952 and its amendments regulate foreign trade etc.

by Syriac Christians who speak Syriac and Arabic. A few villages 1621
are completely Armenian. Most of these villages are around Kubur √63
el Bid and Qamishli. These Christian peasants are very devout. 191
They are also conservative and always remember the injuries inflicted 795
upon them in Turkey. There is hardly a Christian family in the
towns or villages which did not lose a relative or a friend in the massacres.
Therefore they are always on their guard against their Moslem
neighbors and are always suspicious of the Government. Their
~~bitterness is not likely to disappear~~ for some time to come, and is a
factor to be considered in the political development of Jazirah.

The Christians of Jazirah belong to all creeds and denominations. 795
The largest community in numbers and in importance is the Syriac 779
Orthodox, followed by the Armanian Orthodox. There are Chaldeans, Syriac Catholics, Armanian Catholics, Protestants, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, and Nestorians. It should be mentioned that what determines the origin and affiliation of a man in Jazirah is not his language or dress, but his Church. Thus a Kurd who speaks only the Kurdish language, who lives like a Kurd on the same standard of living, and who dresses like one, is yet an Armenian or a Chaldean or a Jacobite because he belongs to one of these Churches. His original language and customs have been lost by living for ages in a foreign environment. That is why one finds in Jazirah and the mountains beyond it the only Christian Kurds in the world. But in reality they are not Kurds. They are Armenians or Syriacs or Chaldeans who have adopted the Kurdish language and their true nationality can be known only by referring to their Churches.

A more recent concentration of Christians in Jazirah is consti- 1621
tuted by the Assyrians around Tal Tamr on the Khabur. Following 167
the massacre of the Assyrians in Iraq in 1933 and their expulsion from 657
that country, the French in Syria gave them asylum, and the League 463
of Nations appropriated funds to settle them along the Khabur. 648
Lands were granted to them and villages were built in which motors and pumps were installed for irrigation. Nevertheless during these 19 years all the efforts appear to have been useless. The ten thousand Assyrians who migrated to Syria lead a wretched life. Their motors are not in a working condition, their crops are not abundant and they are now trying to sell their lands. The reasons for such a condition may be found in the fact that the Assyrians are not farmers and the lands given to them are of a poor quality.

During the French Mandate, the Christians of Jazirah, with the 6621
memory of the Turkish massacres still fresh, and considering all 1821

Moslems alike whether Turks or Arabs, and being suspicious of the 6624
surrounding Kurdish and Bedouin tribes, relied on the French for 1824
protection and became a tool in their hands to oppose the nationalis-
tic aims of Syria.

When in 1936 negotiations between France and Syria started for 648
the conslusion of a treaty similar to the British-Iraqi treaty, French 669
officials in Syria who were opposed to such a policy played on the
fears of the Jazirah Christians and incited them to rebellion. They 619
rose up and drove out the Syrian public employees and proclaimed
Jazirah independent. They were supported by a majority of the Kurds
who feared Bedouin domination in case Syria became independent,
and by some Bedouin Sheiks notably the Sheiks of Tay and of Jagjag
Jubur. Dham and Mizor, Chiefs of Shammar, and the Sheik of Kha-
bur Jubur, remained loyal to the Syrian Government. The problem
was solved when the negotiations in Paris failed and the French re-
sumed their authority in 1937. All remained quiet during the war,
and when Syria became independent through the intervention of the
British in 1945, no one in Jazirah made any difficulty.

The population of Jazirah was estimated at the end of 1951 to 1624
be 162,000. This estimate can only be tentative because no census 659
was taken and the number of unregistered persons is large. The Sham-
mars are mostly unregistered and so are the Juburs. The same holds 361
true of the Kurds who have migrated from Turkey.

The number of members in each denomination is unknown, as is the number of town dwellers. Qamishli is estimated to have 30,000 inhabitants, Amuda and Derbassiya 8-10,000 each, and Hassakeh above 10,000. Kurds probably outnumber the Bedouins in Jazirah.

435 656 15 percent he must buy his wheat at the port of export for LS 203-5. This means about LS 252 at Aleppo for the farmer of Jazirah. And this is the price at which the market is stabilized at present, while if this imposition did not exist the farmer would have sold his wheat for LS 300-350.

● 648 489 7. The discussion of prices brings about a consideration of markets for the surplus Syrian wheat. During the French Mandate, and up to March 1949, Syria and Lebanon formed one economic unit. The first independent regime under Shukri Quwatly, which lasted until the first coup d'etat in 1949, preserved this unity though some friction did exist between the two Governments. President Quwatly was emphatic about the necessity of this union. Then politicians mentioned to him the alleged advantages which Lebanon had over Syria in the partnership, he invariably replied that the benefit from the partnership to the national Arab idea transcends in importance any material disadvantage resulting to Syria.

But aside from this political consideration, the union did present specific advantages to the Syrian farmer. Lebanon imports yearly about 80,000 tons of wheat. This is approximately one-third the quantity exported by Syria. Further, Lebanon had a customs duty of 50 per cent on foreign wheat other than Syrian. This meant that the Syrian farmer was assured a market for part of his crop at prices higher than world prices, besides selling Lebanon cheese, samneh, vegetables and fruit.

Whatever the economic advantages according to Syria in its new policy of separation from Lebanon, and they are highly doubtful, the Syrian farmer has lost a sure market.

In fact, the question of economic separation between Syria and Lebanon has never been examined as a purely economic propositon, but has always been mixed with considerations of national prestige and alleged Syrian economic subservience to Lebanon. This highly emotional language was designed to confuse the issue for the benefit of industrial groups, especially textile manufacturers who were crowded by Lebanese competition.

435 439 8. Another misconception shared by the Government and most of the people is that Syrian prices of wheat should be governed by world prices. The fact is that Jazirah wheat can never normally

fluctuations in water flow. Up to 1950, all the water of Jagjag was 3121
used for growing rice. In 1950-51, more emphasis was given to 241
cotton. This year it is half cotton and half rice.

The Turks started a project for diverting all the waters of the 3121
Jagjag from Syria to Turkey. They began building tunnels to carry 648
one quarter of the waters east above Kubur el Bid, and the rest to the plains above Amuda and Dirbassiya. The Syrian Government objected and negotiations began in Ankara. The Syrians believe that they have reached an understanding with the Turkish authorities to divide the river waters equally. The Turks did not sign the agreement, claiming that they want a full agreement on water rights covering all common rivers and especially the Orontes. They are afraid that Syria might use all the waters of the Orontes in its irrigation projects. Since Syria holds this arm, the Jagjag dispute will be solved equitably.

It is difficult to estimate the area irrigated yearly by the Jag- 3121
jag. The waters are used only for summer crops, and last year 241
about thirty thousand dunums were planted to cotton. When the plantation is rice the area is nearer to ten thousand dunums. There is of course always a certain amount of land devoted to vegetable growing for the needs of the city.

d. Underground Water

Recently a few enterprising farmers tried to solve the problem 3121
of dependency upon Turkey for irrigation water by digging for water on their own lands. An Armenian outfit from Aleppo with a boring machine of local construction dug several wells in the region of Qamishli and Amuda. Three of the wells in the villages of Tal Ahmad and Tal Anbar near Kamishli were successful. Water to run a 4-inch pump was found at a depth of 18 meters. The other holes around Amuda were not so successful. Water was not found at a depth of 70 meters. These experiments are of course inconclusive and sufficient underground water may be found to be abundant in Jazirah. Further studies are needed.

a. The Khabur

The largest source of irrigation water in Jazirah is undoubtedly /133
the Khabur. Its average flow is 52 cubic meters per second which

6: Government of Syria--41 G-4 (no date)1952 MDI Syria MDI

III The Baghdad Railway

The Baghdad Railway which runs 247 kilometers in Syria is 496 the principal means of transport for goods. It handles about 200,000 648 tons of goods every year. The bulk of Jazirah wheat is transported over it. But it has had in recent years keen competition from trucks in spite of the bad roads for several reasons. The Qamishli-Aleppo line passes for 70% of its length through Turkish territory and is under Turkish control. When the Turks choose to irritate the Syrians they restrict the entrance to the stations and in numerous other ways frustrate the Syrians and cause them hardship. Whole trains are unaccountably delayed for days in the Turkish stations.

Already passenger traffic is handled almost entirely by planes, 484 cars and busses, except in winter months when the roads are unsafe. A bus charges LS 10 from Qamishli to Aleppo and makes the trip in 12 hours. A small car charges LS 20 and makes the trip in 8 hours. It takes the "Express" 20-22 hours to reach Aleppo from Qamishli and the fare is LS 30 in second-class "wagon lit" with tips.

For merchandise the train rate is LS 23.5 per ton from Qamishli 489 to Aleppo. It costs the farmer an additional LS 6-12 depending on the distance to transport a ton of wheat from the field to the station. There is also an amount of about LS 4 involved in handling, all of which makes the actual rate by train about LS 35.

The truck charges LS 35 from Qamishli to Aleppo during the wheat season but it carries the wheat directly from the combine in the field to the merchant's store in Aleppo thus reducing the handling expenses to a minimum and transporting the goods in the shortest time. If the farmer is not hard pressed for money, which is rather rare, and can wait until the winter months and spring, he can transport his wheat for a rate as low as LS 10-15 per ton by truck. Inversely, the cost of tranport from Aleppo to Jazirah rises in winter and spring and decreases in summer and autumn.

Though truck transport is more advantageous in many ways than transport by train, the number of trucks available and the condition of the roads make the transport of a whole crop by trucks impossible. To achieve that, a complete road network needs to be constructed, diesel trucks would have to be imported and the discriminatory tariffs against them abolished.

8: Kirk
648
●

MDl Syria MDl

[For data on international relations leading to the independence of Syria and observations on nationalistic movements within Syria during the French Mandate, see Category 116, pp. 78-129; 272-306.]

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD I

the smaller landowners resent the domination of the greater, 563
the peasants are restive under their lords. A small but 621
powerful class of educated young men is growing up which can no longer be satisfied either with the preservation of a closed and unchanging society or with Druzism as a system of belief. These social and intellectual processes are bound to alter the whole basis of the problem in the next generation or two.

10

The district of Latakia includes the mountain-range known 162
as Jebel Ansariyah and the coastal plain at its foot. It is 795
in some sense a natural unit, and the bulk of its population possesses a distinctive character. In 1938 its inhabitants numbered approximately 370,000, of whom 235,000, or roughly 60 per cent, were Alawis, 70,000, or about 20 per cent, Sunnis, 6,000 Isma'ilis, and most of the remainder Christians, mainly Greek Orthodox. In the town and immediate surroundings of Latakia itself, the Sunnis formed the largest single community.

The Alawis are the descendants of the indigenous inhabitants 795
of the district, who have endured a number of conquerors 631
but have managed to preserve their individuality under varying forms. For the greater part of the Ottoman period the district was virtually autonomous while acknowledging the suzerainty of the Sultan; but during the nineteenth century the control of the Ottoman authorities was greatly extended. Local autonomy in practice meant local tyranny by the feudal lords, who were to a large extent Sunnis. This is indeed one of the differences between the situation in Latakia and that in Jebel Druze: whereas in the latter the predominance of the Druzes is unchallenged, in the former the Alawis are in a majority but the Sunnis constitute a large proportion of the landowning class. Moreover both the Sunnis and the Christians are at a higher level of education and political consciousness than the Alawis, who are themselves sub-divided into sects and tribes and possess little communal consciousness.

Making allowances for local differences, what was said 795
about the problem of the Druzes applies also to that of the 648
Alawis. There are some, especially among French officials and missionaries, who believe that the first task is to raise

795 the standard of living and education among the Alawis and 648 to develop their corporate consciousness; and who believe that if this is to be done the Alawis must be given a separate administration specially adapted to their needs and under benevolent foreign tutelage. There are others who admit the importance of these tasks but who emphasize that it is equally necessary to give the Alawis a consciousness of being part of the Arab nation as an alternative to sectarianism and to a paralysing localism. Among the Alawis themselves, one party adheres to the former school of thought, a second to the latter, but the greater number are suspicious of all interference from outside and wish only to be left alone.

Here, as in Jebel Druze, great social and intellectual processes are beginning of which the results have yet to appear. But it will probably take longer to bring Alawi society to a point where it becomes possible to face the problem of its definitive political status.

II

311 The problem of the Jazirah, the north-eastern province 167 of Syria, is in many ways different from that of Jebel Druze and the Alawi territory. Before the War of 1914–1918 it was largely an empty district, except for Beduin tribes and some Kurdish villages. The land was sparsely cultivated where it was cultivated at all; life was insecure and government scarcely existed. When the French occupied Syria they established a considerable measure of public security, and this increased the attraction for settlers which the Jazirah already possessed by virtue of its fertility. The French authorities encouraged the settlement of members of Christian and other minorities who had been forced to leave their dwellings in Turkey, or who preferred not to live in the predominantly Moslem parts of Syria. In the last twenty years many thousands of Armenians, Jacobites and Syrian Catholics, together with Assyrians from Iraq after the events of 1933, have moved into the province; and even larger numbers of Kurdish Moslems, dislodged from their homes in Eastern Turkey by the policy of forcible assimilation 361 adopted by the Turkish Government. The new towns of 311 Hassetche and Qamishli and new villages have been created and new crops introduced, and the district has been opened up to regular commerce. The Beduin have been controlled AND CERTAIN TRIBES AMONG THEM PERSUADED TO SETTLE ON THE LAND.

VIII. FOREIGN INTERESTS

I

648 OTHER difficulties which the nationalist movement has to face arise from the existence of important foreign interests in Syria and Lebanon. This chapter summarizes those interests as they stood at the outbreak of the war of 1939; it is clearly impossible to state with any precision the state of affairs which will come into existence after the war.

648 Before 1939, the interests of France far exceeded those
175 of other States. That the Mandate for Syria and Lebanon should have been conferred upon her rather than any of the other Great Powers was due immediately to the war-time agreement between the Allies for the partition of the Ottoman Empire, but more fundamentally to the long-standing French connexions with the Ottoman Empire in general and Syria and Lebanon in particular, and to the sentiment which that connexion had aroused in certain quarters in France. French writers sometimes trace it back to Charlemagne, who conducted obscure negotiations with the Abbasid Caliph, Harun ar-Rashid, and is said to have obtained, after an exchange of letters and presents, the custody of the Christian Holy Places. They are on firmer ground when they emphasize the part played by Frenchmen in the Crusades. It is true that the Crusades were by no means an exclusively French enterprise. But French Kings, priests, nobles and knights were prominent in the organization of the Crusading States in geographical Syria. The ruling-class of the States was largely French in origin and language. They left their mark upon Syria in the castles and churches which they built and of which the ruins still survive; and equally the Crusaders and the land which they had conquered and for a time ruled made a deep impression upon the imagination of France. It is unwise to ignore the historic imagination of peoples, even when its content is partly legend and only partly history.

175 The Crusades were an isolated episode. During the two centuries which succeeded the fall of Acre in 1291, no particularly close connexion existed between France and geographical Syria: commerce between the Levant and Western Europe was largely in the hands of the Italian merchants, while cultural and political relations scarcely existed. The modern French connexion with the countries of the Eastern

3

The foremost interest of France was to preserve the sympathy and affection which her long protection of the Christians had won for her among them. The Catholic Christians were the only wholeheartedly pro-French element in the population of the Mandated Territories, and their friendship was an asset too valuable to be given up. It was largely in order to strengthen their position and to reward their fidelity that the State of Greater Lebanon was created at the beginning of the period of French occupation;[1] this may or may not have been a wise method of attaining the desired end, but the considerations which led to its adoption must always have had weight with any French Government, whatever its political complexion and its general policy in regard to the Mandated Territories.

In the years between the two wars, France came to regard herself as having special obligations not only to the Catholic Christians but to all the minorities, and especially to the Druze and Alawi communities and the mixed population of the Jazirah. She had made articulate the corporate consciousness of these groups, where she had not created it; and she had given expression to it in her administrative organization. She could not therefore ignore the effects which her policy might have upon their relations with the remainder of the population. More particularly, she had to take into account that the nationalists suspected her of having fostered particularist feelings both in order to weaken the sentiment of national unity and to use them as an excuse for delaying the grant of independence. Some of the resentment which they felt towards France was directed towards the minorities, and especially those of them who were traditionally attached to France. Frenchmen who realized this feared that should French influence be wholly withdrawn, this might have had serious consequences for some at least of the minorities, and maintained that it was therefore both an interest and an obligation for France so far as possible to ensure the safety of her protégés and friends after the termination of the Mandate no less than while it was still in force.

It must be added that not all these minorities reciprocated the feelings which France had or claimed to have for them;

---

[1] See Chapter IX.

646 some recognized 'foreign protection' as a gift too dangerous to be accepted.

4

648 Sympathy for France depended not only upon her special
171 links with certain elements in the population, but also upon the hold of French culture over the educated classes. Most educated people of whatever religion speak French; many know it as well as they know Arabic, and there are some, mainly among the Catholics, for whom it has replaced Arabic as their native language. French books are widely read, French social customs copied, and there are many who have travelled or studied in France and have a profound affection for the country, its people and its way of life.

177 It is the Catholic missions, working through schools and
871 other institutions, which have played the largest part in
799 winning Syria and Lebanon for French civilization. The mission-schools and colleges and the Université de S. Joseph in Beirut have always concentrated on imparting to their students a mastery of the French language, even if that should involve neglect of the teaching of Arabic. The majority of those who possess any understanding of European culture have been trained by the Jesuits, the Franciscans or other missionaries; and so long as the Catholic schools continue to provide the best intellectual education which the country can offer, there is no need to fear for the position of French culture. The social work carried out by the missions must also be mentioned; they have borne on their shoulders a great part of the work of alleviating social conditions, and have deserved the gratitude of those who care for social justice. Thus all French Governments, clerical or anti-clerical, regarded it as essential to maintain for the missions their right of unrestricted activity.

179 Long before the beginning of the French occupation, the
649 Governments of France, seeing more clearly than some others the political significance of cultural ties, set themselves to preserve and extend the predominance of French civilization. The institution of the Mandate gave greater freedom for their efforts. In some ways the position of French culture was improved in the years between the two wars. French was one of the official languages and knowledge of it was an indispensable qualification for holding most of the higher

offices in the administration. The organization and procedure 179 of the law-courts was based upon French models, and the 648 system of laws which they dispensed, although basically Islamic, was deeply influenced by the French codes. French was the main foreign language taught in official schools, and the official system of examinations was adapted from that of France. (This was one of the considerations which led certain sections of French opinion to oppose the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936. Although the exchange of letters attached to the Treaty contained guarantees for the preservation of French cultural influences and provided for the recruitment of foreign officials and advisers from France in preference to any other country, the critics regarded the termination of the Mandate as likely to bring to an end the supremacy of French culture in Syria and Lebanon.)

In spite of the efforts of the French Government, however, it is probable that twenty years of French rule harmed rather than helped the position of French culture. The political grievances and discontents of those years, and the almost continuous opposition of the greater part of the Syrian and Lebanese people to their French masters, shook the ascendancy of France over men's spirits. In 1939 there were more who spoke French than there had been in 1918, but perhaps fewer who loved and believed in France.

5

France's economic interests in her Mandated Territories, 648 although not of first-rate importance, nevertheless were not 471 negligible. There were only a few thousand private French citizens resident in the country, and comparatively little landed property was in French hands; Syria and Lebanon had never been looked upon as regions for settlement. The total value of French investments was of the order of magnitude of one milliard francs; it had not increased to any great extent since before the War of 1914-1918. Most of it was invested in public utilities: the railways, the port of Beirut, electric power, waterworks and so on. A French company also held the monopoly for the production of tobacco. In fact, almost all public concessions of importance had been given to companies wholly or mainly French in ownership. About one-tenth of the total investment was sunk in the railways, almost all of which were controlled by the 'Damas-

648 Hama et Prolongement' (D.H.P.) company. Since 1925 this
471 company had had an agreement with the local Governments by which the latter made good any losses incurred by the company in the working of the railways, and received a progressive share of any profits which were made.

452 There were a number of French financial institutions with interests in the Mandated Territories. The bank of issue, the Banque de Syrie et du Grand Liban, had its headquarters in Paris, and of its 25½ million francs of share-capital over 20 millions were in French hands, while twelve out of its sixteen directors were French, the remainder being Syrians
[436] and Lebanese. By an agreement made in 1924 and subsequently renewed, the Banque was given the exclusive right of issuing Syro-Lebanese currency. It also performed the functions of an ordinary commercial bank. In addition, a great deal of commercial banking, mortgage and land-credit business was transacted by the Banque Française de Syrie, the Crédit Français d'Algérie et de Tunisie and the Compagnie Algérienne.

439 In 1938 France imported goods of greater value from Syria and Lebanon than did any other country except Palestine; and she exported to them goods of greater value than did any other country except Great Britain. The total value of her imports from them was 105,894,000 francs. The main articles which she imported were vegetables and fruits; she did not obtain from the Levant States any important raw materials for her industries. She exported to them 197,818,000 francs worth of goods, including large quantities of iron and iron goods, machinery, chemical products, precious metals and silk goods.[1]

471 The Mandated Territories were also important for French
649 commerce as providing a link in France's communications with her Far Eastern possessions: the civil air-ports were used as stopping places on the route from France to Indo-China. Moreover, one of the two pipe-lines through which the oil of Iraq is conveyed to the Mediterranean passes through Syria and Lebanon to reach the sea at Tripoli. This was of dual importance to France: first because French interests owned 23¾ per cent of the share-capital of the Iraq Petroleum Company, and secondly because France obtained between one-third and one-half of her total oil-supply from Iraq, by

---

[1] For detailed figures, see Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Rapport*, 1938, p. 203.

way of Tripoli and Haifa. There was a possibility that 471
Syria might in the future come to be more important still 648
to France; oil-prospecting had been going on in the Jazirah [305]
for some years, and in 1940 an agreement was concluded for the exploitation of oil discovered there between the Syrian Government and Petroleum Concessions (Syria and Lebanon) Ltd., a subsidiary of the Iraq Petroleum Company.

One more economic factor which could not be left out of 648
account was the immense cost to France of her occupation of Syria and Lebanon. There was first the expense involved in installing herself in Syria and Lebanon: her participation in the Eastern Campaign during the last war and her conflict with Faisal after it. Even more important than these were the expenses of the civil and military administration of the Mandate. According to an official estimate, by 1936 the Mandate had cost France 4,843 million francs, of which the military expenditure accounted for 4,300 millions and the civil for 543.[1] By Article 15 of the Mandate France was entitled, once an organic law had been framed, to ask the national Government to whom she was handing over responsibility for repayment of the expenses she had incurred in performing her duties as Mandatory Power.

6

The primary strategic purposes which France hoped to fulfil by her presence in Syria and Lebanon were the maintenance of her position as a Mediterranean Power, on a level with Great Britain and Italy; the protection of her maritime and air routes to the Far East; and the defence of the oil pipe-line from Kirkuk to Tripoli, through which she derived a large proportion of the oil needed by her armed forces. None of these objects was capable of achievement by France alone, but only by France in conjunction with Great Britain, the dominant foreign Power in Egypt, Palestine and Iraq; the Levant States were only of first-class strategic value to France in so far as the possibility existed of a co-ordinated Franco-British strategy in the Eastern Mediterranean. Thus it was an essential French interest to pursue in the Levant a policy similar in the most important respects to that pursued by Great Britain; this was normally recognized by French

---

[1] G. Henry-Haye and Pierre Viénot, *Les Relations de la France et de la Syrie* (Centre D'Etudes de Politique Etrangère, Paris, 1939), p. 22.

Governments, however suspicious their representatives in the East might be of the activities of the British in the neighbouring countries.

The attainment of the strategic objects mentioned above did not necessarily involve the permanent military occupation of the whole of the Mandated Territories. This was recognized by the French Government in the Treaties of 1936, which provided for the unrestricted use of Lebanese territory and waters by French forces, but also for the complete withdrawal of land-forces from Syria after a transitional period, and the retention on Syrian soil of two air-bases alone. Even this was perhaps more than was absolutely essential. It would perhaps have been enough for France to retain control of the naval base of Beirut, the terminus of the pipe-line at Tripoli and an air-base, and to have in addition the assurance of the alliance and co-operation of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments should war break out.

7

One other political interest of France must be mentioned. She was the dominant Power in North West Africa, of which the majority of the inhabitants are Arabic-speaking Moslems. One of her motives for occupying Syria had been the desire to control so important a centre of Arab and Moslem opinion ; and in framing her policy in Syria and Lebanon, she had always to take into account the repercussions it was likely to have in Morocco, Algeria and Tunis. To repress nationalism in the Levant might have caused unrest in North Africa ; but to concede everything to nationalism in the Levant might have strengthened the demand for similar concessions in North Africa, where it would have been more difficult for France to grant them.

8

Thus any French Government which wished to preserve the essential interests of France felt bound to pursue a policy in Syria and Lebanon which would serve : (i) to protect the Catholic and other Christian communities, in accordance with the French tradition in the Levant, and also the other minorities ; (ii) to safeguard the work of the missions and the position of French culture in Syria and Lebanon ; (iii) to assure her control over at least one naval and one air base, and perhaps over other strategic points as well ; (iv) to conform with her general policy in the other Arab and Moslem territories which she controlled ; (v) to conform with British policy in the surrounding Arab countries ; and (vi) to safeguard her investments, her commercial interests, and her access to the oil of Iraq, by means of the pipe-line to Tripoli, and also to the oil of Syria itself if it should prove to be worth exploiting.

9

Great Britain had no direct interests of great significance in Syria and Lebanon. Her trade with those countries was important for them, but only of small value for her ; and her investments were negligible. There were a few British missionary schools, but for the most part British missions had restricted their activities to the British Mandated Territories, leaving Protestant missionary work in the French area to the Americans. The British Government had never in recent times regarded the country as falling within its sphere of interest, although during the Eastern crisis of the 1870's Disraeli had considered the possibility of occupying Alexandretta, but rejected it in favour of Cyprus.

Such interest as Great Britain possessed in Syria and Lebanon sprang from her position first as a Mediterranean Power and secondly as the Western Power having the closest connexion with a great part of the Arab world. An unfriendly Power in possession of naval, military and air bases in Syria or Lebanon would have been able to threaten the key points of the British strategic system in the Eastern Mediterranean : the naval bases at Haifa and Alexandria, the Suez Canal, the air and land routes from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf, the oil-wells of Iraq and Persia and the pipe-line from Kirkuk to Haifa. For Great Britain it was therefore necessary, either that the strong points in Syria and Lebanon should be under British control or that they should be in the hands of a Government, indigenous or foreign, which was likely to be on the same side as the British Government in any major international issue which might arise.

Her position, both as a Mediterranean sea-power and as paramount Power in India, had led Great Britain to extend her political influence over the greater part of Arab Asia as well as Egypt. She had therefore been brought face to

648 face with Arab nationalism, and had been compelled to work out a policy towards it. Thus she could not be indifferent to trends of political opinion and activity in Damascus and Beirut, two of the main centres of Arab nationalism; the more so because of the part which Syrian and Lebanese teachers were playing in moulding the minds of the young and spreading the nationalist gospel in all parts of Arab Asia. Further, Great Britain's interests were affected by the policy adopted towards Arab nationalism by the Government or Governments in control of Syria and Lebanon. If that Government was a national one or if, although foreign, it was favourable to the nationalist aspirations in those respects in which they were at variance with British policy, nationalist discontent in countries under British control might receive encouragement and help from Syria or Lebanon. During the years of the Arab revolt against British policy in Palestine, for example, not only individual Syrians and Lebanese but also the Syrian Government, although not the French authorities, gave support to the insurrection; the leaders of the revolt found a refuge in Beirut and Damascus after they were compelled to leave Palestine, and continued to direct the revolt from there. If on the other hand the controlling Power in Syria and Lebanon showed itself less favourable to Arab nationalism than Great Britain, then there would be discontent and unrest in those countries; and this state of mind might communicate itself to the regions in the British sphere of influence. If the Power in control of Syria and Lebanon were allied to Great Britain, it was possible that the latter would receive part of the blame for the shortcomings of her ally's policy.

Thus Great Britain was concerned to ensure first that the strategic points in Syria and Lebanon should be in friendly hands, and secondly that if those countries should be under foreign control, the policy adopted by the controlling Power in regard to Arab nationalism should be in general conformity with that adopted by Great Britain.

10

Of other Western Powers, the United States had a certain interest in Syria and Lebanon. She wished to safeguard the property and unrestricted activity of the American religious, educational and philanthropic institutions: the missions, the schools, the University of Beirut and the hospitals. These 648 institutions had been built up by American talent and devotion, and millions of dollars had been sunk in them; they were largely responsible for the respect with which America was regarded in the Levant.

Moreover, there are in the United States some hundreds of thousands of American citizens of Syrian and Lebanese birth and descent, most of whom still have a sentimental attachment to their country of origin, and many of whom still possess property there. Apart from such property, American economic interests were not large; the most important of them arose from the American ownership of 23¾ per cent of the share-capital of the Iraq Petroleum Company. An American Government which was concerned to look after the American foreign investments could not be indifferent to the political fate of a country so near to the oil-fields of Iraq, and through which runs the oil pipe-line from Kirkuk to Tripoli.

For many years the Italian Government had been attempting to create interests in Syria and Lebanon, presumably with a view to using them as pretexts for an extension of its political influence in the Levant. At the beginning of the present century an attempt had been made to challenge the French protectorate over the Catholics. Schools and hospitals had been built, which, with the help of subsidies from the Italian Government, continued to function until the entry of Italy into the war. In the last few years before the war, attempts were made to increase Italian trade with Syria and Lebanon. Those attempts were partly successful; and there were also some important Italian economic enterprises in the country, the most important of them the Banco di Roma. But the main object of these measures, as of more obvious and direct measures of propaganda, was not achieved. Apart from a few individuals, there was no section of the population which was Italophil or with which the Italian Government had succeeded in establishing particularly close relations. This was perhaps due to the belief that the Italian Government regarded Syria and Lebanon as possible fields for Italian settlement.

The German Government had no direct interests in Syria and Lebanon, except in so far as it had been able during recent years to use Arab discontent as a means of weakening

148 the position of Great Britain and France. The Russian Government had shown no special interest in the area since the Revolution of 1917 ended the traditional connection of Russia with the Greek Orthodox.

11

The Vatican also had an interest in Syria and Lebanon arising out of the existence of large Uniate communities. This interest is looked after by an Apostolic Delegate ; the seat of the Delegacy is Beirut, and in the past it has been filled alternately by French and Italian clerics. The Uniate Churches, which cling tenaciously to their privileges and traditions, have direct contact with the Vatican, where there exists a special Eastern Congregation charged with the affairs of the Eastern Uniate communities. The Vatican was concerned to safeguard the position of the Churches and the rights of individual members of them, and thus was interested in the nature of the régime existing in Syria and Lebanon. It was also anxious to protect the interests of the Catholic missions which undertook so many activities in the country and exercised a profound influence upon large sections of its population.

12

The main Turkish interest in Syria sprang from geographical proximity. The southern frontier of Turkey adjoins northern Syria. For the most part it is an arbitrary line, following the Baghdad Railway. On the Turkish side of the frontier there are many thousands of Arabs ; on the Syrian side, there are not only a large number of Turks and Turcomans, but also Kurds and Armenians who have emigrated from Turkey for political reasons during the last two generations. In these circumstances, frontier incidents and complications are always to be feared. It was therefore in the interest of Turkey that whatever Government controlled Syria should be strong enough to maintain order in the frontier regions and at the same time should have no desire to embarrass its neighbour by stirring up frontier troubles.

There had always existed among the nationalists in Syria a suspicion that as Turkey grew stronger she would attempt to revive the glories of Ottoman days and to expand southwards. This suspicion was intensified when, after the signature of the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936, Turkey revived her claim to Alexandretta and Antioch. She finally obtained them in 1939[1]; and although in return she gave for the first time a guarantee of the Turco-Syrian frontier, it was widely believed in Syria that Turkey only wanted the Hatay as a first step to the seizure of Aleppo, which before the war of 1914–1918 had been the economic centre of a large region which included much of what is now southern Turkey as well as what is now northern Syria. There has, however, been no indication that this belief was justified, or that Turkey possessed any desire to extend her rule over non-Turkish populations. Turkey was not in principle hostile to Syrian independence, so long as a Syrian or Arab national Government would be neither able nor willing to threaten Turkish security, or to attempt to win back the Hatay. It was possible, however, that at some time in the future she would demand a rectification of the Turco-Syrian frontier, on the ground that the present frontier hampered trade on the railway, which more than once crosses from the Turkish to the Syrian side and back again.

13

Of the other Near Eastern States, Egypt's interest in the fate of Syria and Lebanon sprang partly from the bonds of religion and language which link her people with theirs, partly from her anxiety to see the strategic strong points in friendly hands, whether indigenous or foreign, and partly from her economic connexions with them, actual or potential. In Egypt alone of the Arab countries was it possible to see the beginnings of an indigenous capitalism: the industrial and other enterprises affiliated to the Banque Misr were rapidly expanding, and in the future they and similar groups would probably look more and more to the surrounding Arab countries, and Syria and Lebanon among them, as markets for their products and fields for investment. Already there was a subsidiary of Banque Misr working in the French Mandated Territories, the Banque Misr-Syrie-Liban. About half the share-capital in it was owned by Egyptian interests, the other half by Syrian and Lebanese. So far it had devoted itself to commercial business rather than to the financing of industry.

Iraq shared with Egypt the desire to see the strong points

---

[1] See Chapter X.

W/in Syria and Lebanon in friendly hands. Even more than Egypt she was conscious of the ties of religion and nationality which bind the Iraqis to the Syrians and Lebanese; indeed, the independence of the whole of geographical Syria, as a first step to Arab union, was one of the cardinal points in the foreign policy of Iraq, whose Government had been sympathetic to every movement of Arab unrest or revolt in Syria or Palestine. Its sympathy was due largely to genuine Pan-Arab feeling, which is strong among the ruling elements in Baghdad, but also to Iraq's need for an outlet on the Mediterranean.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1

PART THREE

IX. THE FRENCH MANDATE

I

THE principle of the Mandate system was formulated in 648 Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which stated that:

> 'To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.
>
> 'The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League. . . .
>
> 'Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory . . .
>
> 'In every case of mandate, the Mandatory shall render to the Council an annual report in reference to the territory committed to its charge.
>
> 'The degree of authority, control or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory shall, if not previously agreed upon by the Members of the League, be explicitly defined in each case by the Council.
>
> 'A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates.'

648 The preamble of the Mandate recorded the decision of the Principal Allied Powers to entrust Syria and Lebanon to a Mandatory charged with the duty of rendering administrative advice and assistance to the population in accordance with the provisions of Article 22. France had undertaken to exercise the Mandate on behalf of the League of Nations. Within three years she was to frame an organic law for Syria and Lebanon in agreement with the native authorities and taking into account the rights, interests and wishes of all the population. She was further to facilitate the progressive development of Syria and Lebanon as independent States, and so far as circumstances permitted to encourage local autonomy (Article 1). She was empowered to maintain troops in the territory for its defence ; to recruit local forces from the inhabitants for defence and the maintenance of order ; and to use the ports and communications for the passage and maintenance of her troops and materials. Once the organic law entered into force, the local forces would be under the local authorities, subject to the authority and control of the Mandatory. Syria and Lebanon might contribute to the cost of maintaining the forces of the Mandatory (Article 2). The Mandatory was entrusted with exclusive control of the foreign relations of Syria and Lebanon and the protection of their nationals abroad (3). She was to ensure that no part of the territory was ceded, leased or placed under the control of a foreign Power (4). For the duration of the Mandate the privileges and immunities which foreigners had enjoyed by capitulation or usage in the Ottoman Empire would not be applicable in Syria and Lebanon (5). The Mandatory was to establish a judicial system which should assure to natives as well as foreigners a complete guarantee of their rights (6). Guarantees should be given for the personal status, religious interests and endowments of the various peoples, and for freedom of conscience and worship ; and no discrimination of any kind should be made on grounds of differences in race, religion or language (6, 8). The Mandatory was charged to encourage public instruction in the native languages and to safeguard the right of each community to maintain its own schools, teaching in its own language (8). It was to refrain from interfering in the management of religious communities and sacred shrines,

and to limit its supervision of religious missions to the maintenance of public order and good government. The activities of these missions should not be restricted provided it was confined to the domain of religion; they were also to be entitled to concern themselves with education and relief (9–10). In economic matters there should be no discrimination against the nationals or goods of any state member of the League of Nations, as compared with those of the Mandatory or any other foreign State; subject to this condition the Mandatory might impose such taxes and duties as it thought necessary. Again subject to this condition, it was empowered to take such steps as it might think best to ensure the development of the natural resources of the territory and safeguard the interests of the local population. There should be no distinction of nationality as between state members of the League in the grant of concessions for the development of natural resources. General monopolies should not be granted; those of a purely fiscal nature would however be permissible provided they did not involve a monopoly of the natural resources in favour of the Mandatory or its nationals, nor infringe the economic equality guaranteed above (11). Further articles dealt with the régime of extradition; with the adherence of Syria and Lebanon to international agreements in a number of spheres and to measures of common utility adopted by the League for preventing and combating disease; and with the establishment of a law of antiquities (7, 12, 13, 14). Article 15 empowered the Mandatory, once the organic law referred to in Article 1 should come into force, to arrange with the local Governments for the reimbursement of the expenses it had incurred.

French and Arabic were to be the official languages (16). The Mandatory was obliged to make an annual report to the Council of the League of Nations on the measures taken to carry out the provisions of the Mandate (17). The Council's consent would be required for any modification in the terms of the Mandate (18). On the termination of the Mandate, the Council would use its influence to safeguard the fulfilment by the Governments of Syria and Lebanon of financial obligations regularly assumed during the period of the Mandate (19). Finally, the Mandatory agreed that any dispute between it and another member of the League in regard to the interpretation or application of the Mandate should be submitted

648 to the Permanent Court of International Justice if it could not be settled by negotiation (20).

3

The Permanent Mandates Commission provided for in Article 22 of the Covenant was duly set up, and met regularly until the outbreak of the present war. It was composed at the beginning of nine members, but in later years the number varied; they were appointed by the Council of the League of Nations, and a majority of them was drawn from countries other than those to which Mandates had been entrusted; the members sat as private individuals and not as representatives of Governments.

Its business was to examine the report on the political, social and economic development of the Mandated Territories submitted annually to the Council of the League of Nations by the French Government; to record its comments, recommendations and criticisms in regard to the matters dealt with in the report; and to receive and examine petitions addressed to the League by inhabitants of the Mandated Territories or other interested parties. In the performance of these tasks it was helped by the presence at its meetings of a representative of the Mandatory Power, and sometimes of the High Commissioner himself, who in statements and in answers to questions endeavoured to explain his Government's policy.

The Commission on the whole performed its functions with great skill and honesty. It was never unwilling to record its frank but responsible criticisms of French policy and to suggest improvements. Its activities were beneficial in so far as they upheld the principle that the Mandatory Power had been given the Mandate as a sacred trust of civilization, and also in so far as they gave publicity to the way in which the Mandate was being exercised. But its usefulness was limited by various factors. Its operations were slow; it had no direct contacts with the population of the territories with which it was dealing; all petitions had to come to it by way of the Mandatory authorities; and it was handicapped, as it occasionally had reason to complain, by the unwillingness of the French Government to provide full information on controversial subjects. Moreover, it had no power except that of sending observations to the Council of the League.

4

That the Mandate for Syria and Lebanon was entrusted to France was due mainly to her claiming special interests in the Levant. It was therefore natural that her policy during the Mandatory period should be determined only partly by her conception of the Mandate, and partly by her conception of her own interests. In so far as her policy was based upon the second factor, it was directed to two ends: firstly to opposing and weakening the growing tide of Arab nationalism, with its claim for complete independence; and secondly to strengthening the traditionally or potentially Francophil elements, the Christians, Alawis, Kurds and other minorities, and especially to strengthening the position of Lebanon *vis à vis* the interior. This second aim was partly a means of achieving the first, but partly an end in itself, arising out of France's traditional friendship with certain of the Christians.

The claim to independence was opposed for various reasons. There were some who, while not opposed to Arab nationalism as such, were reluctant to make any concessions which would, as they believed, weaken the position of France in the world; their thought, like that of almost all Frenchmen, was dominated by the fear of a world war and the need to build up the strength of France. Others, in those circles where suspicion of British intentions was current, regarded Arab nationalism as inspired by and allied with Great Britain; or at least its success was regarded as likely to lead to an expansion of British at the expense of French influence in Syria and Lebanon, since if they became part of an Arab union they would also become part of the sterling bloc, and English would tend to replace French as the main foreign language in business and education. By some, Arab nationalism was thought to be essentially a movement against the West, a reaction of Asiatic obscurantism and traditionalism against the forces of light and progress, and therefore an enemy of France's tutelary mission. By many Catholics it was regarded as a movement of Moslem fanaticism and necessarily opposed to Christianity, and more particularly to the work of Christian missions in the Levant and to those Syrian Christians who had for so long relied upon French protection.

Others again, while not opposed to the grant of independence in principle, believed that the time was not ripe for it, since the Arabs had not yet learned to rule themselves

648 wisely and efficiently, and more particularly to treat their minorities with discretion. This school of thought was critical of Great Britain's premature withdrawal from Iraq, partly because it forced France's hand in Syria and Lebanon, and partly because the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930 was not thought to provide adequate guarantees for minorities. Its fears were increased by the killing of the Assyrians in 1933. Opposition was strengthened by the tendency of French statesmen, soldiers and officials to look at Syria and Lebanon with North African eyes: not simply to regard the Arabs of the Levant as similar to those of French North Africa, but to frame their policy in the Mandated Territories with an eye to its repercussions in Morocco, Algeria and Tunis.

Nevertheless it must not be thought that French opinion was universally opposed to the independence of the Mandated Territories. There were many on the Left who were opposed to imperialism, who had a guilty conscience about French policy in the Mandated Territories and who wished to make amends for the injustices of the past. There were others who realized that French policy in Syria and Lebanon was bound to keep in line with British policy in the other Arab countries; and if Great Britain chose, wisely or unwisely, to negotiate treaties of independence with those countries, then France could not do otherwise in Syria and Lebanon. There were advocates of an "enlightened imperialism," who started from the assumption that sooner or later nationalism was going to achieve its objectives in some form or other, and that it lay in the power of France only to help to determine the form, and in particular to determine whether nationalism triumphant would be friendly or hostile to France. They hoped to win the friendship of nationalism while there was yet time by concluding a definitive agreement in which France's essential interests would be preserved but everything else freely and sincerely given up. Finally, there were those who believed that France ought to concentrate upon strengthening her position in Europe and not to incur heavy commitments in the outside world.

Perhaps the best statement of the case against orthodox French policy was made by M. Pierre Viénot, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Popular Front Government of 1936, in a lecture in March, 1939. The Mandated Territories, he insisted, could not be regarded as a colony. For one thing, there had been practically no French settlement in them, and their economic links with France were only tenuous. What was more important, their population could not be treated as a backward people incapable of governing itself. This had been recognized in the text of the Mandate. According to the conception of the Mandate, " the Mandatory Power commands and governs only to educate. Its role is that of a tutor, its authority provisional and transitory." This idea was not simply a theory. It was accepted by the population of the Mandated Territories, whose desire for independence was strong and of long standing. Unless French policy conformed to that envisaged in the Mandate, there was a danger that French influence in the Levant would decline, to be replaced by that of Italy, of Great Britain or of Turkey.[1]

5

The conception of the Mandate held by the French Government was defined by its accredited representative, M. de Caix, at a session of the Permanent Mandates Commission in February, 1926:

'The idea which has governed, if not the whole exercise of the Mandate, at any rate all the efforts made to organize it, is the following: the Mandate is a provisional system designed to enable populations which, politically speaking, are still minors to educate themselves so as to arrive one day at full self-government. This presupposes that the Mandatory Power will gradually create native organizations in the mandated territory, such as may, when complete, be able to ensure entirely the government of the country and such as may, if they carry out their duties in a proper manner, render the intervention of the Mandatory unnecessary. It appears from this that there should not be any intervention on the part of the organizations of the Mandatory Power in the internal affairs of the native governments. . . .

'In conformity with this conception, countries like Syria and the Lebanon, which have not one but several governments, must be provided with a native organization, not only for the government of the various States but also for the purpose of internal relations between them.

'Since the populations under mandate are endowed with a government including the necessary organizations to make them self-supporting, provided that they perform their duties in a normal manner, it is necessary, on the other hand, that the Mandatory Power should be in a position not only to give advice but also to correct the working of the native governments and even to make up for their deficiencies. . . .

---

[1] G. Henry-Haye and Pierre Viénot, *Les Relations de la France et de la Syrie* (Centre d'Etudes de Politique Etrangère, Paris, 1939).

‘Consequently, the mandate system calls for a complete native organization, but side by side with it an organization of a tutelary nature, possessing the necessary authority to ensure the good government and progress of the country.’[1]

6

It was in the light of this conception that the political organization of the Mandated Territories was framed during the first years of the Mandatory period. It may be described as a dual organization. On the one side stood the High Commissioner, the representative of the Mandatory Power. His was the ultimate responsibility for the administration of Syria and Lebanon; but in principle (which was, however, often contravened in practice) his functions were restricted in normal times to advice and supervision. To assist him he had at his headquarters in Beirut a political and a military ‘cabinet’, and a number of departments, staffed in the upper ranks by officials from France or the French Empire, and under the control of the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner's principal administrative assistant; they included departments of public security, education, public works, antiquities, etc., and the organization for Beduin affairs. He also had an information service composed of army officers acting under his direct control and charged with the function of keeping him in touch with movements of political feeling, thought and action throughout the country. These officials of the ‘Services Spéciaux’ were to be found in every district and in practice exercised an almost unlimited influence over the local administration and political life. A special group of them was in charge of the Beduin, whose affairs were thus brought under the direct control of the High Commissioner.

This was the ‘organization of a tutelary nature’ of which M. de Caix spoke; its expenses were paid from the French Budget. But in addition to it, there were certain other departments under the immediate control of the High Commissioner. The most important of them were the customs administration, the posts and telegraphs, and the control of concessionary companies (this was important because the railways, most public utilities, and the production of tobacco were in the hands of such companies). These departments dealt with matters of common interest to all parts of the Mandated Territories, and could not therefore be wholly controlled by the Governments of the different regions into which, as will be shown below, the Territories were divided. When some organization representative of all those Governments should be established, it would take over the control of these departments; but until that should occur, they were provisionally administered by the High Commissioner. Known collectively as the 'Common Interests', they had their own budget, with funds drawn almost wholly from the customs revenues; from it their expenses were defrayed, and the surplus was distributed between the indigenous Governments.

---

[1] *Minutes of the eighth session of the Permanent Mandates Commission, February-March, 1926*, p. 45.

When the High Commissioner was a soldier, he was himself Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces in Syria and Lebanon, which were mainly French and colonial but included a number of units, the 'Troupes spéciales du Levant', raised from different sections of the population. When he was a civilian, the forces were under a separate Commander-in-Chief, who was himself, however, subordinate to the High Commissioner. A large part of the expenses of the army of occupation was a charge upon the French Budget; but the 'Troupes spéciales' were paid for out of the budget of common services.

7

The High Commissioner, as has been said, exercised general functions of advice and supervision; but in principle the actual work of administration was performed by indigenous Governments, established by the High Commissioner and controlled by him through his Delegates or representatives in the main administrative centres of the country. They were staffed mainly by local officials, when competent ones could be found, but in the earlier years the governors were often French. A number of French administrative 'conseillers' and technical advisers were attached to the various departments; they ranked as officials of the Governments to which

648 they were attached and not as members of the High Commissioner's staff. These Governments had legislative as well as executive powers, subject to the control of the High Commissioner and his Delegates, and within limits of the 'conseillers': a control which at times deprived the Governments of almost all freedom of action.

648 That the Mandatory Power decided to establish several
642 indigenous Governments instead of one for the whole territory
631 was officially explained as being due to the separatist feelings of various sections of the population and their different levels of development. The first of them to be set up was the States of Greater Lebanon, which was created in August, 1920, by the addition to the pre-war autonomous Sanjaq of the towns and surrounding districts of Beirut, Tripoli, Sur and Saida; the wheat-producing regions of Baalbek and the Biqa'; and the districts of Rashaya and Hasbaya, stretching southwards from the foot of Mount Hermon to the Palestinian frontier. Its independence was proclaimed in September, 1920. In the same month, the Territory of the Alawis was established in the region around Latakia. It was given the name of 'State' in July, 1922. In April, 1922, the independence of Jebel Druze was proclaimed, in consequence of an agreement for the establishment of a Druze national Government, signed in March, 1921, by a number of Druze notables and a representative of the High Commissioner. The remainder of Syria had been divided after the expulsion of Faisal into the two States of Aleppo and Damascus, created in September, 1920. Within the State of Aleppo, the Sanjaq of Alexandretta was given a special régime, in accordance with the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement. Legislatively the Sanjaq formed part of the State, but administratively it possessed a large degree of autonomy, it had a special budget, and Turkish was recognized as an official language side by side with French and Arabic.

This organization was intended to be provisional only. Although in the first instance the personnel of the Governments was appointed by the High Commissioner and many of the most important posts were filled by French officers and officials, it was anticipated that self-governing institutions would be established as soon as possible, and that some permanent and regular system of co-operation between the governments would be created. In 1922, a Representative Council was established in Lebanon. In June of that year a

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MDI

further step was taken with the creation of a Syrian Federation 648 which included the States of Damascus, Aleppo and the 642 Alawis, but not those of Greater Lebanon and Jebel Druze. 631 The Federation was given wide legislative powers, exercised through a Federal Council composed of delegations elected by the Representative Councils which were established in the member-states. At its first meeting the Council elected as its President Subhi Barakat, an Antiochene of Turkish origin.

The Federation did not work satisfactorily. The States of Damascus and Aleppo desired a closer form of union, and certain elements in that of the Alawis one less close. In December, 1924, General Weygand, who had succeeded General Gouraud as High Commissioner in April, 1923, dissolved the Federation. As from January, 1925, the two States of Damascus and Aleppo were combined into a single State of Syria, of which the capital was Damascus and within which the Sanjaq of Alexandretta continued to possess a special régime. The State of the Alawis resumed its separate existence without any direct connexion with the new Syrian State.

Thus from the beginning of 1925 onwards the Mandated Territories were divided into four different political units: the State of Greater Lebanon, known later as the Lebanese Republic; the State of Syria, later called the Syrian Republic and including the partly-autonomous Sanjaq of Alexandretta; the State of the Alawis, known from 1930 as the Government of Latakia; and the Government of Jebel Druze. This organization continued unchanged until 1936, when Latakia and Jebel Druze were formally annexed to Syria; in 1939 they were again given almost complete autonomy, but in 1942 were once more attached to the Syrian State.

The judicial system was complex and not altogether satis- 671 factory. Many although by no means all matters of personal 692 status—for example, marriage and divorce—continued to be subject to the jurisdiction of the tribunals of the religious communities. All other matters were subject to the jurisdiction of the civil courts, administering a system of law based partly upon Islamic jurisprudence and partly upon modern European codes. In cases in which only citizens of the Mandated Territories were concerned, the personnel of the courts was almost wholly indigenous. But cases involving citizens of foreign States or their interests were taken before the 'mixed

671 courts', of which the personnel was partly French and only
692 partly indigenous; this system replaced that of the 'capitulations'
which had existed in the Ottoman Empire and of which
the operation was suspended so long as the Mandate should
continue.

8

648 The declarations of Syrian and Lebanese independence in
642 1941 have been gradually followed by a partial extension of
self-government. Although the Mandate has not yet been
formally extinguished, strict Mandatory control no longer
exists. During the years from 1918 to 1941, during which
France exercised this control, her efforts were attended with
some success, but in general met with failure.

185 Briefly stated, the achievement of France was to bring
into existence in Syria and Lebanon some of the essential
conditions which would make possible the transition from
a medieval to a modern society. Law and order were
firmly established, even in backward regions where civil
government existed scarcely or not at all in Turkish days.
The improvements which were effected in the system of
491 communications assisted this process. Good trunk-roads
185 now link the main towns, and subsidiary roads have opened up
the countryside to motor-traffic. These and other improvements
have served not only to increase the efficiency of government
but also to diminish local differences and prejudices.

652 The system of public finance was reduced to some sort of
185 order. It was placed on a comparatively reasonable basis,
although there are still serious flaws, as for example the
regressive incidence of taxation. On the whole budgets
balanced; and after the share of the French Mandated
Territories in the Ottoman Debt was paid off in 1933 they
had no public debt at all.

185 The improvements in public order and administration made
possible an extension in the area of cultivation. The nomads
were no longer allowed to raid the settled land, and were
being gradually induced to become peasants. Some of the
areas which they formerly dominated were thus opened up
to agriculture; this was especially marked in the Syrian Jazirah.

185 For the first time for many centuries, the religious minorities
795 were treated on a level of full equality with the Sunni Moslems
in all official matters, judicial and administrative alike. (Some

648 The great failure of French rule was to win the approval
186 and co-operation of the Syrian and the bulk of the Lebanese people. A large part of the population, and especially of the more articulate elements in it, was from the very beginning highly critical of French rule if not irreconcilably opposed to it ; and criticism and opposition did not grow less with the passing of time.

To a great extent this attitude was based upon particular grievances, real or imagined. It was complained that France had failed to provide a reasonable standard of administration. The French officials were too often corrupt, avaricious and arbitrary ; while the Syrian and Lebanese officials were not wisely chosen, properly trained, or given a due measure of responsibility. In consequence of this, the development of public services, even in spheres far removed from controversy and where the necessity of advance is generally recognized, was unsatisfactory, and Syria and Lebanon fell behind the neighbouring countries in providing amenities of life and opportunities of work.

The French officials, the indictment contintues, not only proved themselves inefficient, but adopted a harmful attitude towards those whom they ruled. They did not grasp the special obligations of the Mandate, but treated the country as if it were a French colony, and the inhabitants as on a level with France's African subjects ; and at least in the early part of the Mandatory period they did not hesitate to express their contempt for the Arabs. The use of Sengalese troops first to expel Faisal and then on garrison duty seems to the Syrians and Lebanese to be a sign of this contempt.

It was further alleged that the elementary rights of the individual were denied : there was no freedom of speech, of assembly or of publication ; imprisonment without trial was frequent. A particularly widespread complaint was of the activities of the officials of the 'Services Spéciaux', who, it is claimed, far exceeded their duties and often became petty despots in their districts, and even fomented disorder for their own or for France's benefit.

There were also various economic and financial grievances. It was said that the tariff-system did not give adequate protection to local enterprise ; and often the extent to which France's hands were tied in this regard by the provisions of the Mandate was ignored. The grant of all the more important concessions to French companies was widely resented. The terms of the contracts between the Banque de Syrie et du Grand Liban and the Syrian and Lebanese Governments were criticized as being too favourable to the Banque; and the linking of the currency to the fluctuating franc was resented as introducing into the country a factor of economic instability which might have been avoided. The arrangements by which French military and civil personnel could obtain imported goods duty-free, and the abuses which sprang from it, formed another common grievance. Finally, there was the widely-believed accusation that the French deliberately drained the country of the gold which it possessed in Ottoman times.

618/86

The inadequacies of the French administration were resented by almost all in both Syria and Lebanon, whatever their general political views. But there was also a large section of the population which opposes French rule on grounds of principle. The majority of the nationalists always refused to recognize the Mandate, which they regarded as contrary alike to the 'natural right' of nations to independence, to the promises made by the Allies during the first world war, and to the spirit of Article 22 of the Covenant, which provides for administrative advice and assistance, but not for semi-colonial rule. Besides opposing the Mandate as such, they resented the way in which it was imposed upon the Syrian people, and still more the way in which it was carried out. Not only was no independent Government established, but no appreciable progress was made towards that end. Only half-hearted attempts were made to set up representative institutions; little was done to create an efficient civil service; what was more important still, the division of the country into a number of States, and the encouragement given to separatism and to the intransigence of the minorities, seriously diminished the possibility of establishing a stable and representative Government. In the light of these facts, the nationalists believed that France never made a sincere attempt to fulfil the obligations imposed upon her by the Mandate in virtue of which she ruled Syria and Lebanon. They believed also that the longer France remained in the Levant, the more she would gradually destroy the possibility of national revival and self-government.

648 Underlying all these grievances was resentment at the
1¼ division of geographical Syria into French and British Mandated Territories: a division which was criticized both on grounds of principle and because of the economic and administrative dislocation which it caused. It is true that France was not wholly to blame for this, but it was an additional reason why the nationalists wished to obtain freedom of action.

10

The ultimate political objectives of Arab nationalists in Syria and Lebanon are the same as those of the nationalists in other parts of Arab Asia: the unity and independence of the Arab people. But in so far as the political fate of Syria and Lebanon has been different from that of the other Arab regions, the immediate objectives of the Arab nationalist movement in the French Mandated Territories have differed from its objectives elsewhere. From 1918 to 1941 these immediate objectives were to bring about a radical change in French policy and to replace Mandatory rule by genuine self-government.

Although Arab nationalists were united in desiring the attainment of these objectives, they differed upon the means by which and the speed with which they hoped to attain them. Some of them did not consider that Syria and Lebanon were yet fit for complete independence, and advocated co-operation with the Mandatory Power, the gradual extension of self-government, the creation of a modern administrative machine and an educated ruling-class and electorate, and thus the achievement of independence by gradual stages. They included some considerable personalities but were never able to organize themselves into an effective political group. Others, who refused to recognize either the Mandate or the administrative partition of the French Mandated Territories, demanded immediate independence and unity.

The adoption of one or other of these attitudes did not necessarily imply friendship or hostility towards France as such. Even among so-called 'extremists' there was a widespread admiration for French culture, and a recognition that without the influence of that culture the Arab literary and political revivals would have been impossible. Those who opposed French policy were not necessarily hostile to France; and those who were Francophil were not necessarily free from all distrust of French policy in the Levant. To call the nationalist opposition anti-French or xenophobe would be misleading, although it does contain elements to which those terms could be applied.

Nor would it be correct to regard the 'moderate' and 'extremist' groups as sharply differentiated from one another. They differed not on fundamental questions but on questions of means; they were akin to one another in sympathies, and individuals from the two often worked together. In so far as they were groups at all, they were groups of which the membership was constantly shifting. This was true also of the differences inside the 'extremist' section. There were some who saw no hope of obtaining independence except by the use of force. There were others who hoped to obtain it by the negotiation with France of a treaty similar in its nature and its terms to the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930, which terminated Great Britain's Mandate over Iraq. There might be a few who disapproved of methods of violence on principle, and at the other extreme a few who disapproved of negotiating a treaty which would involve compromise and concession. But the majority would have supported negotiations for a treaty when they seemed likely to be fruitful, and have been willing to resort to violence if that should seem the most hopeful or the only way of attaining their objectives. As Chapters X-XII will show, the history of the years between 1920 and 1941 saw several changes of attitude on the part of the nationalists.

During those years, however, the nationalist movement was always essentially one of opposition. In Iraq, nationalism achieved its first objective, independence, comparatively early, and was brought face to face with practical problems of administration and construction. But in Syria and Lebanon the first objective was not so easily achieved, and in 1941, after more than twenty years of effort, the nationalists were still striving towards self-government, which obsessed them to the exclusion of other aims.[1]

---

[1] Although the declarations of independence made in 1941 changed the formal nature of French rule in Syria and Lebanon, they did not materially alter the attitude of the population to France. The complaints which were made during the earlier period are still made, and the Syrians and Lebanese are less willing than ever to acquiesce in French predominance. See Chapter XII and Postscript.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
Lebanon ME1

L
665

independence, and less disposed to establish close relations with Syria and other Arab countries than the latter.[1]

5

S
648
631

The State of the Alawis also remained tranquil, once the rising of 1919-1921 had been suppressed. The effort of the Mandatory authorities was directed mainly to encouraging the communal consciousness of the inhabitants (often by playing on their fears); and to raising their material and intellectual level through such measures as the creation of educational and medical services and the giving of assistance to agriculture. In these tasks they had considerable success; socially and economically the district progressed. Further, a greater degree of equality than had previously existed was established between the Alawis, Sunnis and Christians. The administration was mainly in French hands, although there was a Representative Council and efforts were made to increase the share of the inhabitants in the government, as trained and suitable administrators became available. In 1930 an Organic Law was promulgated defining the nature and activities of the political institutions of the State, whose name was then changed to 'the Government of Latakia'.

S
186
648

The Alawis and many of the Christians were content to have no direct connection with the State of Syria, and among the former there developed a more conscious particularist spirit than they had previously possessed. But the Sunnis, here as in Lebanon, disapproved of a situation in which from being the dominant class they became a minority, and accused the Mandatory Power of neglecting their interests in favour of those of the Alawis; they, and all those who held Arab nationalist views, saw clearly the dangers in France's policy of encouraging the separatism of the Alawis and teaching them to rely on foreign support. They demanded the reincorporation of the region in the State of Syria, and their demand was supported by the Sunnis and Arab nationalists in Syria.

6

S
648

The history of the other two States was not so tranquil. Alike in Syria and Jebel Druze unrest and discontent appeared in the early years of the Mandate, and issued finally in the revolt of 1925-1926.

---

[1] For recent changes in Lebanese feeling, see Postscript.

648 In the State of Syria the disquiet may be traced back to
667 that opposition to the general policy of the Mandatory Power
668 which has been analyzed in Chapter IX. The opposition was
strengthened by the many administrative and economic grievances which have also been dealt with. It found expression in a number of local disturbances and risings at the very beginning of the French occupation, the most notable of them the revolt of Ibrahim Hananu in North Syria and the rising in the Hauran. As time went on the restlessness was increased still further by the instability of French policy: the appointment and recall of a number of High Commissioners; the consequent changes in the higher personnel of the mandatory administration; the creation and then the dissolution of a Federation. These were further causes of disquiet: the repercussion in Syria of the growing hostility of the Palestinian Arabs to Zionism and to British policy, and the activities of Syrian emigrants, particularly of the Syro-Palestinian Committees in Cairo and in Geneva. Of the group in Geneva the leading spirit was the Amir Shakib Arslan, a distinguished writer and publicist, by origin a Lebanese Druze, who had given all his life to the spread first of Pan-Islamic and then of Pan-Arab ideas.

668 All these factors contributed to create a strong opposition
[665 to French rule; it was led and organized by the 'People's
648 Party', which grew rapidly in the years prior to the revolt.
The nationalist opposition was to some extent concerned with general Arab problems: the independence and union of the whole Arab world. In local matters, its main purposes were two. First, it advocated the union of the French Mandated Territories. Jebel Druze and the Alawi region, it was claimed, should be wholly incorporated in the State of Syria; Lebanon was to be at most autonomous within a Syrian or Arab State, and was to be shorn of the territories assigned to it in 1920. Secondly, Syria should be given genuine self-government immediately, and complete independence as soon as possible. This would involve on the one hand the relaxation of French control over the administration; on the other a rigid definition of the points at which and the period for which French armed forces could be maintained in Syria, and ultimately their complete withdrawal. It was around these two points that Franco-Syrian relations revolved throughout the period of the Mandate.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria/MD1

7

In Jebel Druze discontent developed later and more sud- 648
denly. The Druzes were not hostile to the Mandatory Power 631
so long as the latter was ruled in its dealings with them by the 621
agreement of 1921. An indigenous administration was 563
established. Salim al-Atrash, a member of the leading family of the Jebel, was chosen as Governor by the Druze notables. His tenure of office was troubled, it is true, but this arose entirely from conflicts inside the Druze community. There were rivalries within the Atrash family; for example, Sultan al-Atrash revolted against his kinsman the Governor. Moreover, there was a growing movement of the smaller landowners against the great families of the Jebel; the Druze feudal organization was beginning to crack.

In 1923, on the death of Salim al-Atrash, the Druze notables 648
elected as Governor a French official, Captain Carbillet. He 668
initiated a policy of administrative and social reforms. They were sincerely intended to improve social conditions in the Jebel, and were carried out with great vigour. But the novelty of his measures, the use of compulsory labour and other harsh methods to execute them, and a lack of tact about Carbillet's way of dealing with opposition, quickly alienated many sections of the population.

Until 1925 there was no open unrest; and there was no contact between Arab nationalist circles in Damascus and the malcontents in Jebel Druze. But in May, 1925, Captain Carbillet went on leave, and the unrest of the Druzes came to the surface in complaints against him and demands for the redress of grievances. These demands were not sympathetically received by General Sarrail, who had succeeded General Weygand as High Commissioner in November, 1924, and who had already aroused widespread hostility by his anti-clericalism, his disrespect for tradition and his clumsy handling of people. He increased the discontent of the Druzes by declaring that in his view the agreement of 1921 had only an historical importance, and he brought it to boiling-point in July, 1925, when on his orders three Druze leaders were lured to Damascus under pretence of receiving their demands, arrested there and sent into enforced residence at Palmyra.

8

In July the Druzes rose in revolt under Sultan al-Atrash. 000

9

The insurrection had many consequences in the Jebel. 631 It prevented any further attempts to interfere with the customs 648 and social structure of the Jebel. Its administration was placed under stricter French control, but its separation from the State of Syria was maintained. The administrative system was formalized by an Organic Law issued in 1930. Under this Law, the region was to be administered by a Governor, appointed by and responsible to the High Commissioner, and possessed of considerable legislative and financial as well as executive powers. In practice he was always a Frenchman. He was to be assisted by a Council of Government, composed partly of heads of administrative departments and partly of appointed members chosen from among the notables. All important acts of the Government would require the approval of the High Commissioner, who was also to exercise such sovereign powers as did not belong to the local Government.[1]

The administration of the Jebel followed a policy the effect of which, whether deliberate or not, was to drive a wedge between the Druzes and the Arab nationalists, whose temporary alliance had given the revolt of 1925 its strength. The separatist spirit so deeply grounded in Druze tradition was encouraged, and there was grafted on to it among a certain section a feeling of dependence upon France. There remained, however, another section who wished for union with Syria.

10

In the State of Syria, the process of pacification was accom- 648 panied by one of political change, with the aim of improving the state of feeling and removing some of the grievances of the nationalists: grievances which had been partly endorsed by the Permanent Mandates Commission at its special session to investigate the revolt, held at Rome in February-March, 1926. The change was initiated by M. Henri de Jouvenel, who replaced General Sarrail in November, 1925. He took the first steps which were designed to lead ultimately to self-government. In Lebanon he allowed the Representative Council 648 to draft a Constitution for the State; in the State of the Alawis 666 he held elections for a Constituent Council to draft an Organic Law; and in the State of Syria he ordered elections for

---

[1] For text, see Dareste, *Les Constitutions Modernes*, V, pp. 694–7.

666 similar Councils to be held in all parts of the country not
648 under martial law. In spite of a boycott by the nationalists, the Syrian elections were held, but the Representative Councils which resulted from them proved ineffective.

648 The next step was to form a Government which should be
643 more acceptable to public opinion than that which had been
645 presided over by Subhi Barakat since the creation of the Syrian State, and which resigned in December, 1925. The Presidency of the State was offered to Shaikh Taj ad-Din al-Hasani, the son of one of the most respected religious leaders in Damascus. He laid down certain conditions of his taking office. The High Commissioner could not, however, accept them, and after some delay appointed as provisional President Damad Ahmad Nami, a Circassian by origin. He formed a Ministry which for a short time included members of the 'People's Party'; its programme envisaged the summoning of a Constituent Assembly, the conclusion of a Franco-Syrian treaty and the attainment of Syrian unity by negotiation with the other States included in the French Mandate.

II

648 In June, 1926, M. de Jouvenel declared to the Permanent Mandates Commission that the French Government intended to negotiate a Franco-Syrian treaty similar to the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922. Next month he resigned and was succeeded by M. Ponsot. The new High Commissioner took the first step towards the establishment of the self-government which had been foreseen by his predecessor, by preparing for the elaboration of an Organic Law. A beginning had indeed already been made with this: M. de Jouvenel had consulted various notables on the form which the future political organization of the country should take.

In July, 1927, M. Ponsot made a declaration in which he explicitly identified himself with the policy approved by the French Government and the League of Nations and defined by his predecessors. Regard for the wishes of the people concerned had, he maintained, been the idea which had throughout inspired French policy. In accordance with this idea, the framing of the definitive constitution of the countries under French Mandate was to be the work of those peoples. The Mandatory Power would exert itself to bring about a general agreement and to arbitrate in any differences which

might arise ; in default of an agreement, it would take appropriate 648
measures to maintain order and to guarantee peace.
The Mandatory Power desired to favour and hasten the
political evolution of the States under its protection, and to
promote their economic development. As for the 'Common
Interests', the High Commissioner would continue to administer
them with the active and ever-increasing assistance
of the representatives of the States.[1]

A few months later, in February, 1928, M. Ponsot judged
that the time had come for the election of a Constituent
Assembly. In that month the state of siege declared at the
beginning of the revolt was finally raised, the censorship
suppressed, the special tribunals established during the revolt
abolished, and a general amnesty issued. At the same time 645
Damad Ahmad Nami's Ministry was replaced by a new
provisional Government of 'moderate' politicians presided
over by Shaikh Taj ad-Din al-Hasani, with the task of preparing
the way for the creation of regular institutions to which
it could hand over its functions.

The elections were held in April of the same year. In the 661
towns, most of those elected belonged to the more uncompromising 646
section of the nationalists, the opponents of Shaikh
Taj ad-Din's Ministry ; in the countryside, however, they
were mainly moderates. Of the seventy members of the
Assembly, over two-thirds supported the Government, but
owing to their lack of cohesion and the decision of the Government
not to intervene in the proceedings, it was the so-called
'extreme' nationalists who dominated the discussions. They 646
were the more powerful in that they had recovered from the 665
confusion caused by the collapse of the revolt, and had
succeeded once more in organizing themselves in a party,
the 'National Bloc'. In so far as it had a founder he was 665
Ibrahim Hananu, an Aleppine and a man respected even by
his opponents. The Bloc was not a unitary party so much as a
working alliance of individuals and groups. It included
leading members of important landowning families, like Jamil
Mardam Bey from Damascus, Saadullah al-Jabiri from Aleppo,
and Hashim al-Atasi, the President of the Bloc. It included
also individuals important rather for character and intellect
than for representing large sections of opinion, like Faris al-Khuri,
a Protestant lawyer, law-teacher and financier. It

---

[1] For text, see *Oriente Moderno*, September, 1927, pp. 409-11.

665 was supported by several groups which preserved something of their individuality inside the alliance. The most important of them was the 'Istiqeal' group, descended from one of the secret societies of the years before 1914. It advocated the complete independence of the Arab countries and tended to be more uncompromising than the other constituent elements of the Bloc. Its leader was Shukri al-Quwatli. Among its other prominent members were Nabih al-Azmah, the Amir Adil Arslan, and Riyadh as-Sulh, perhaps the most important Arab nationalist leader in Lebanon.

646 One of the most prominent of the members of the Bloc,
642 Hashim al-Atasi, was elected President of the Assembly when
it met in Damascus in June, 1928; while Ibrahim Hananu
became President of the Commission set up to draft the
Constitution. The Commission completed its work by August,
642 and laid its draft before the Assembly. The Constitution which it had drawn up was modelled on those of Western democratic countries, and provided for the exercise of legislative powers by a single Chamber elected by universal suffrage, and of executive powers by an elected President and a responsible Ministry. In addition it contained guarantees for the rights of individuals and communities. Thus Article 6 stipulated that all Syrians should be equal before the law, and there should be no inequality of treatment on grounds of religion, sect, race or language. Article 15 guaranteed liberty of conscience, the free exercise of all forms of worship, and the safeguarding of the religious interests and personal status of every sect. Article 28 guaranteed the rights of the religious communities, including their right to establish schools, teaching in their own language, subject to the principles laid down by law; and Article 37 declared that the electoral law to be issued subsequently would provide for the representation of religious minorities. (This provision was carried out. Each Parliament elected since 1930 has contained a number of representatives of the minorities, roughly proportionate to their size.)

648 In general the draft was acceptable to the High
642 Commissioner, but there were certain articles to the inclusion of which he objected. Thus Article 2 declared that the Syrian territories detached from the Ottoman Empire constituted an indivisible political unity, which was unaffected by the divisions which had arisen between the end of the war and the

present time. This was a denial of the separate existence of Jebel Druze, the Alawi district, the Lebanese Republic, and Palestine and Transjordan; and M. Ponsot judged it to be irreconcilable both with France's international obligations and with the existing situation in fact and in law. Again, four other Articles asserted the right of the President of the Republic to grant pardons, conclude treaties, appoint representatives abroad and proclaim martial law ([illegible] and 112); and Article 110 declared that the organization of the army would form the subject of a special law. These five Articles also the High Commissioner thought to be incompatible with the obligations of France. He therefore asked that the Articles concerned should be separated from the general body of the draft. The Assembly refused, and M. Ponsot thereupon adjourned it for three months in August, 1928, and for a further three in November. He made an alternative suggestion, that the Assembly should modify the wording of Article 2 and should retain the other offending articles but add to the draft a general reservation safeguarding France's international obligations. This also proved abortive, since he and the Assembly could not agree upon a text for the reservation.

In February, 1929, the work of the Assembly was prorogued *sine die*. During this period and throughout 1929 the split between the National Bloc and 'moderates' grew ever wider. The former, while remaining tranquil, demanded the negotiation of a Treaty to replace the Mandate; the latter continued to advocate a policy of co-operation with France, and attempted without much success to form an effective political organization. The High Commissioner found it impossible to reach an agreement with the nationalists on the constitutional question, while the 'moderates' were too weak and divided for their support to be of value to him; he therefore felt himself bound to give up the attempt to entrust to the Syrian people the responsibility for the elaboration of their own constitution. Accordingly he dissolved the Constituent Assembly in May, 1930, and on his own initiative issued a Constitution for the State of Syria. It was to come into force after the election of the members of a Chamber of Deputies at a date to be fixed by the High Commissioner.

This Constitution was virtually the same as that drafted by the Assembly, except for such changes as were necessary to

642 enable the Mandatory Power to carry out its obligations 648 under the Covenant. Thus Article 2 was modified, and stated merely that 'Syria forms an indivisible political unity'; and an additional article (116) was added to the effect that 'the provisions of the present Constitution are not, and cannot be, in opposition to the obligations undertaken by France in regard to Syria, particularly obligations towards the League of Nations. . . . So long as the international obligations of France in regard to Syria remain in force, any provisions of the present Constitution which are of a nature to affect those obligations will be applicable only under conditions to be determined by agreement between the French and Syrian Governments'.

Simultaneously a number of other decrees were promulgated. In addition to the Organic Laws for the Governments of Latakia and Jebel Druze, already mentioned, they included laws for the Sanjaq of Alexandretta, and for a Conference of Common Interests composed of Delegations from the States and Governments, and charged with the management of their common financial and economic affairs.[1]

12

646 The elections for the Chamber of Deputies took place in January, 1932, and the Chamber met in June. More than three-quarters of its members were 'moderates'. Only a quarter were 'extreme' nationalists demanding full and immediate independence; but as had happened in the Constituent Assembly, the minority soon showed itself to be the dominant element. Its hopes were raised and its case strengthened by the recent conclusion of an Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, the termination of the Mandate and the admission of Iraq into the League of Nations (1930-1932).

643 The first task of the Chamber was to choose the President 645 of the Republic. It elected Muhammad Ali al-Abid, son of 646 Izzat Pasha al-Abid who had been secretary to the Sultan Abdul-Hamid II. He entrusted the construction of a Cabinet to a prominent moderate, Haqqi al-Azm, who formed a Ministry of which half the members were 'moderates' and half 'extreme' nationalists. Negotiations were opened between the Ministry and the High Commissioner for the conclusion of a Franco-Syrian Treaty.

---

[1] For texts of these documents, see Dareste, *Les Constitutions Modernes*, V, pp. 676–98.

The negotiations had not gone far before it became clear that there existed divergences of views between the High Commissioner and the nationalists. The latter claimed that the Treaty should provide for the inclusion in Syria of the Governments of Jebel Druze and Latakia; while the High Commissioner asserted that, although there was no question of granting those regions independence, they were still in need of a special régime, and had not yet reached the stage of development at which it would be possible to come to a final decision upon their political destiny. A large proportion of the inhabitants of the two Governments supported the High Commissioner's contention and opposed their incorporation in Syria. Further, there was disagreement whether, as the French authorities demanded, the Treaty should impose no restrictions upon the occupation of Syria by French forces, or whether, as the nationalists desired, the occupation should be limited in space and time. There were also differences of opinion upon the questions of Syro-Lebanese relations and the retention of French control over the administration of the Common Interests. Deadlock having been reached on these issues, the nationalist ministers resigned in April, 1933, and their places were taken by 'moderates'. The reconstructed Government carried to a conclusion the negotiations for the Treaty, which was signed in November of the same year by the Ministry and by the Comte de Martel, who had succeeded M. Ponsot as High Commissioner. The Treaty declared that France and Syria agreed, once the Mandate should be terminated, to consult one another on foreign policy whenever necessary; to collaborate in the peaceful settlement of any quarrel between Syria and a third state and, if need be, in defensive measures. The French Government undertook to maintain forces in Syria; to help in the organization and equipment of the Syrian army and police; to lend such technical advisers and civil servants as might be required; and to facilitate the admission of Syria to the League of Nations. The Syrian Government undertook to guarantee the rights accorded to individuals and communities in the Syrian Constitution, and to respect the rights of racial and religious minorities. The two States further agreed to maintain the economic unity of the Mandated Territory. The Treaty was to be concluded for twenty-five years, the transfer of authority

648 from the Mandatory Power to the Syrian Government being completed within four years.[1]

648 646 The Treaty was immediately laid before the Chamber. Its reception by the nationalists inside and outside the Chamber was so unfavourable as to make it clear that it had no chance of acceptance. Accordingly the High Commissioner suspended the sittings of the Chamber, withdrew from its cognizance the terms of the Treaty, and authorized the President of the Republic to govern provisionally by means of decree-laws. A year later, in November, 1934, he suspended the Chamber *sine die*. These acts aroused the resentment and indignation of the nationalists, but in general the country remained quiet, apart from local and ephemeral disturbances, throughout 1934 and 1935. In March, 1934, the Government of Haqqi al-Azm was replaced by that of Shaikh Taj ad-Din al-Hasani, which continued in office for practically two years.

13

665 186 Perhaps the most important development of the early 1930's was the growth of a number of political parties with a special appeal to the educated youth of the towns, and therefore of great significance in a country whose political circumstances gave peculiar weight to the actions of the young. Very different from one another in their doctrines and their aims, these parties were alike in that they endeavoured to establish a degree of organization and cohesion which older parties had not for the most part possessed ; alike, too, in that they tried to base their activities not upon gusts of feeling or some immediate objective, but upon systematic and reasoned doctrines. They expressed and attempted to direct the spirit of the youth of Beirut, Damascus, Aleppo and the other towns : a restless youth, discontented both with its foreign masters and with its own older generation, conscious of talents and ideas and cramped by lack of opportunity, drawn simultaneously towards and away from the West, eager and suspicious, hasty and thoughtful. Even when the youth-movements took a paramilitary form, that does not necessarily mean that they were Fascist ; they were merely endeavouring to satisfy certain human needs which in more fortunate

---

[1] For text, see Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Rapport à la Société des Nations sur la situation de la Syrie et du Liban, 1933* (Paris, 1934), pp. 189–95.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1

XI. THE TREATIES, 1936-1939

I

AT the end of 1935 nationalist feeling in Syria came once more 648
to a head. This was due not so much to internal events as 668
to the general unrest in the Eastern Mediterranean, arising out of the Italo-Abyssinian War; this unrest appeared also in Palestine and in Egypt, where it led to the signature of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, a measure which stimulated the demand for the conclusion of a similar treaty between Syria and France. The immediate occasion of the outburst was the death at the end of 1935 of Ibrahim Hananu, the leader of the National Bloc. At his funeral, incendiary speeches were made; and in the first days of 1936 a general strike broke out in Damascus in protest against the failure of the French Government to grant Syria her independence. The strike spread rapidly to the other towns, and soon took on an organized character. It was directed by the National Bloc, which issued a 'National Pact', demanding independence, equality of rights between members of all sects, national unity and co-operation with nationalist movements in other Arab countries, and the raising of social, economic, moral and cultural standards among all classes, as well as the abandonment of the policy of the Balfour Declaration in Palestine.

At first the High Commissioner attempted to break the strike by measures of repression; for example, several of the leaders of the disturbances were arrested. But gradually he took up a more conciliatory attitude. In February he replaced Shaikh Taj ad-Din as Prime Minister by Ata al-Ayyubi, a moderate politician who was more acceptable than his predecessor to the nationalists. At the beginning of March he took a further step, by making a provisional agreement with the nationalists: a Syrian delegation was to go to Paris in order to conduct negotiations with the French Government for the conclusion of a Franco-Syrian Treaty.

The delegation reached Paris at the end of March. It was 648
composed of six members, four of them, including the President, drawn from the National Bloc, and two of them from the Ayyubi Ministry. At first its negotiations with the French Government did not proceed smoothly, since they came up against the same obstacles as had proved fatal to the Treaty of 1933: first, the question of the inclusion of Jebel Druze

and Latakia in the Syrian State, and secondly that of the degree of control which France should retain. The doubts of the French Government upon the first point were increased by the uneasiness of a large section of the Alawis and Druzes at the prospect of being incorporated in Syria.

In June the situation was changed by the accession to power in France of the first Popular Front Government. MM. Yvon Delbos and Pierre Viénot, respectively Minister and Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, were more friendly to Syrian aspirations than their predecessors had been. The negotiations were resumed on a new basis and it was not long before agreement was reached. On September 9th, the Franco-Syrian Treaty was initialled.

The news of the initialling of the Treaty had repercussions in Lebanon, where the Maronites and other supporters of Lebanese independence demanded the negotiation of a similar treaty with France, both as a sign of equality with Syria and as an additional guarantee that the placing of relations between France and Syria on a new and more friendly basis would not involve any change in the status of the Lebanese Republic. The French Government was immediately responsive to this demand. Negotiations were opened in Beirut between the High Commissioner and a Lebanese delegation representative of all important elements in the population and headed by Emile Edde, who had been elected President of the Republic at the beginning of 1936. The negotiations met with no serious obstacle, and in November a Franco-Lebanese Treaty was initialled ; it was approved by the Lebanese Chamber in the same month.

2

The preamble of the Franco-Syrian Treaty recited the progress towards independent nationhood made by Syria, and the agreement of the two Governments to fulfil the requisite conditions for the admission of Syria into the League of Nations. The Governments had decided to conclude a Treaty of friendship and alliance in order to define the relations which would exist between the two States after the cessation of the Mandate, and to settle, through agreements which would form an integral part of the Treaty, the method of executing it.

The text of the Treaty provided for peace, friendship and alliance between France and Syria (Article 1). The two Governments were to consult one another in all matters of foreign policy affecting their common interests, and to adopt towards foreign Powers an attitude consistent with their alliance (2). They agreed to take steps to ensure, when the Mandate should cease, the transfer to the Syrian Government of the rights and obligations resulting from agreements concluded by the French Government in the name of Syria (3). The two countries would act together to settle peacefully any difference between either of them and a third state; and if either found itself involved in a conflict, the other would immediately come to its aid. The Syrian Government would give the French Government all requisite assistance and facilities, including the use of communications (4). The Syrian Government was to be responsible for maintaining order and defending its territory and would ensure the permanent maintenance and protection of French air-routes crossing Syrian territory (5).

The Treaty was to last for twenty-five years, with the possibility of renewal should the parties so desire; to be ratified as soon as possible and communicated to the League of Nations; and to enter into force when Syria should be admitted to the League of Nations (6-7). On the Treaty's entry into force, the Syrian Government was to take over from the French all responsibilities and obligations arising out of international decisions or acts of the League (8).

A number of subsidiary agreements and letters defined the military position of France, also her rights and interests, and the relations of the Syrian Government towards Lebanon, the Druzes and Alawis and the minorities in general. The military convention provided for the formation of a Syrian army with the help of a French military mission and with equipment on the French model. It stipulated in addition that two sites for air bases should be put at the disposal of France for the duration of the alliance; until they should be ready she should be accorded the use of the existing airfields near Damascus and Aleppo. Moreover, for five years from the coming into force of the Treaty, France was to maintain troops in the districts of Jebel Druze and Latakia, but this was not to be regarded as constituting an occupation. The Syrian Government was to give all facilities required by the French forces; and to permit the use of Syrian waters and ports by French vessels.

Exchanges of letters laid it down that Syria would normally recruit foreign advisers and officials from France; that the French Government would protect Syrian nationals and interests in places where the Syrian Government was not directly represented; that the representative of France was to have the rank of Ambassador and to take precedence over representatives of other powers; that the Syrian Government would respect the rights acquired in the name of or for Syria by French real and corporate persons; and that the existing monetary parity between the two countries would be maintained (Exchanges of letters Nos. 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9). Furthermore, the French Government waived its right to demand repayment of the military and civil expenses of the Mandate (11).

In another exchange of letters the Syrian Government undertook to maintain the existing régime in regard to foreign institutions (7); while a protocol provided for the establishment of a judicial régime which should protect foreign interests and at the same time take into account the progress made by the Syrian Government in judicial organization.

A safeguard for the scattered minorities was contained in Exchange No. 5, in which the Syrian Government undertook to carry out the guarantees for individuals and communities laid down in the Constitution. As for the compact Druze and Alawi minorities, their districts were to be annexed to the Syrian State, but to be granted a special administrative and financial régime (6). The maintenance of French troops in those districts would also in fact constitute another guarantee for them.

The Treaty contained no formal recognition by the Syrian Government of the separate existence of the Lebanese Republic, but such recognition was implied by a protocol which declared the readiness of the Syrian Government to enter into negotiations with Lebanon for the regulation of all outstanding questions; the French Government would transfer the administration of the Common Interests either to whatever new organization the two Governments decided to establish, or, if they decide not to set up such a common organization, to the Governments themselves.

The Treaty and its attached documents, as has already been

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MDI
LEBANON MEI

mentioned, were to enter into force when Syria should be admitted to the League of Nations. But there was a long process to be accomplished before that should happen. First the Treaty must be signed by whatever Government issued from the elections shortly to be held in Syria. Then it would need to be ratified by the French and Syrian Parliaments. After ratification would come a transitional period of three years, during which the machinery of an independent State would gradually be constructed. Only when that period had ended would Syria apply for admission to the League of Nations.[1] S 648

The Lebanese Treaty was in principle similar to the Syrian. The only important differences were that it was to be renewed by tacit consent at the end of twenty-five years; that the military convention placed no limits upon the employment of French forces; that the exchanges of letters contained explicit guarantees for equality of civil and political rights between all nationals, and for the equitable representation of the different sections of the population in the Government service; and that the Lebanese Government undertook to carry out a programme of administrative and fiscal reform.[2] L 648 3

The signature of the Treaty was received with approval by a certain body of opinion in France. The view of the parties forming the Popular Front was expressed by M. Pierre Viénot, who had played a leading part in the negotiations. In a speech made at the ceremony of signing the Treaty, he stated that the new alliance between France and Syria did not represent a fundamental change in policy so much as a new form which the traditional relations between the two countries had taken. The Treaty defined the international position of Syria, and at the same time ensured the maintenance of France's collaboration in the economic and cultural life of the Syrian people. In another statement on the same day, he declared that while the Treaty was modelled on that between Great Britain and Iraq, in one respect France had learned by Britain's mistakes, and had provided for the protection of the minorities. L 648 S 648

Nor was approval confined to the Left Wing. *Le Temps*, for example, in a leading article published on September 8th, declared that by the conclusion of the Treaty France had fulfilled her whole duty as Mandatory Power. The solution

---

[1] For the text of the Treaty, see Appendix A2.

[2] See Appendix A3.

L
648 of the minority problem contained in it was satisfactory.
S When the Treaty was ratified, it would firmly establish on a
648 contractual basis a French influence which the too-long maintenance of an authoritarian régime might in the long run compromise.

3

L
649 In Lebanon the signature of the Franco-Lebanese Treaty
668 was welcomed by the Maronites and some other sections of the population. The Sunnis, however, regarded it as a blow to their aim of reunion with Syria; their anger found expression in communal clashes in Beirut and elsewhere at the end of 1936. In spite of their opposition, however, steps
L were immediately taken to carry out the policy of the Treaty
[645] by re-establishing self-governing institutions. The Constitution of 1926 was restored in January, 1937; the Chamber met, and Khair ad-Din al-Ahdab, a Sunni, formed a Ministry. But it soon became apparent that the signature of the Treaty and the revival of constitutional forms had not affected the essential nature of Lebanese political life, which continued to be dominated by sectarian issues.

L A new electoral law was passed in 1937, replacing the
666 existing Chamber by a new and larger one, two-thirds elected
646 on a sectarian basis and one-third nominated. The elections
645 of November, 1937, were marked by corruption on an extensive scale; and the Chamber which resulted from them, and which remained in being until 1939, was remarkable only for the bitterness and complexity of its internal dissensions. The Ministries of the Amir Khalid Shihab and Abdullah al-Yafi succeeded those of Khair ad-Din al-Ahdab, and none of them had any notable legislative or other advance to show.

L The consequence of this was a general loss of interest and
642 faith in the constitutional system as it existed in Lebanon. It was not simply that the established leaders and the parliamentary parties, the Unionists, Constitutionalists and so on, ceased to possess even so limited a hold over public opinion as they had perhaps had; more than that, Lebanese began to ask themselves what purpose was served by the existence of a costly Parliament, filled with landowners and lawyers, wasting its time in internecine quarrels and showing no effective interest in the country's welfare. Had not Lebanon been better ruled under the simple system which had existed

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MDI
Lebanon AEI

before 1914; and was it not ridiculous, as well as expensive, L
for so small a region to have so grandiose and complex a 642
constitution?

As a further consequence, the movement of discontent with L 642
sectarianism was greatly strengthened, and many Lebanese, 646
especially among the young, began to look for an alternative. At one extreme the 'Phalanges Libanaises', the party of Lebanese nationalism, received much support. So too did the 'Syrian National Party', with its doctrine of the total separation of Church and State; while the Arab Nationalists pointed to the failure of the constitutional system as a proof, if one were needed, that an independent Lebanon was too divided, artificial and unstable to exist by itself.

4

In Syria, the first steps towards the execution of the Treaty S 666
were taken immediately after the return of the Syrian delega- 646
tion from Paris. Arrangements were made for the holding of 645
Parliamentary elections; the Chamber was to consist of 86 members, 16 of them representing the religious minorities and 7 the Beduin tribes. The elections, which took place in November, 1936, resulted in an overwhelming majority for the candidates of the National Bloc; and when the Chamber met, on December 21st, its first important act was to choose Faris al-Khuri as its President, and its second to accept the resignation of Muhammad Ali al-Abid from the Presidency of the Republic and to elect Hashim al-Atasi in his place. The Ayyubi Ministry having resigned, the President entrusted the formation of a new one to Jamil Mardam Bey. All the members of his Ministry were drawn from the National Bloc. S

This Ministry found no difficulty in securing the confidence 648
of the Chamber, which unanimously approved the Treaty in December, 1936. It was formally signed by the High Commissioner and the members of the Ministry on December 22nd. S

In the same month, after consultations with notables of the 631
districts of Jebel Druze and Latakia, their annexation to the Syrian State was proclaimed. This proclamation was accompanied by special Statutes granting a measure of administrative autonomy to the two regions. Despite protests from separatist groups against the concept of a unitary Syria, the régime envisaged in these Statutes was inaugurated by the appointment in January, 1937, of two prominent members of the

631 National Bloc, Mazhar Raslan as Governor of Latakia and Nasib al-Bakri as Governor of Jebel Druze.

648 Although the Treaty had not yet been ratified by the French
642 Parliament, it was agreed that the transitional period should be regarded as starting on January 1st, 1937. A beginning was made with the transfer to the Syrian Government of functions hitherto exercised by the French authorities. The Government was given the right freely to prepare and carry out its budget, and a certain control over the police; in principle the High Commissioner ceased to exercise his right to veto legislation, and the 'conseillers' to control ministerial acts. But the Mandatory Power still retained the conduct of foreign relations, the ultimate responsibility for public order and certain administrative services such as the supervision of the Beduin tribes.

665 These events seemed to show that the policy of the Bloc was
186 successful. It was still united; it had an overwhelming majority in the Chamber; its adherents filled the offices of the Government; it commanded a large measure of support in the country, especially among the younger generation.

Opposition to the Bloc existed, but it was so far largely inarticulate and undirected. It consisted of a handful of Deputies; of some extreme Arab nationalist organizations, which refused to recognize the Mandate and regarded co-operation with the French as treason; and of the separatist movements among the Alawis and Druzes and in the Jazirah.

The hopes of Syrian independence reached their climax in the celebrations which marked the return to Syria of the newly-amnestied exiles, Dr. Shahbandar and Sultan al-Atrash in May, 1937, the Amir Shakib Arslan and Ihsan al-Jabiri in June. It seemed as if the country were entering upon a new period of national construction under leaders whose patriotic energy had only been strengthened by disappointment, imprisonment, and long years of exile.

5

648 The next two years saw the collapse of these hopes. The claims of Turkey to Alexandretta, the growth of separatist movements, the failure of the French Government to secure the ratification of the Treaty, the unrest caused by the disturbances in Palestine, the administrative failure of the Nationalist Government and finally the growth of an internal

opposition: these factors between them brought to an end the experiment in national government which had been initiated in 1936.

The first blow to Syrian hopes came almost immediately. It has been described how the Turkish Government had consented in 1921, under the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement, to the inclusion of the district of Alexandretta (called in Turkish the 'Hatay') in the French Mandated Territories, on the understanding that it should be granted a special régime.[1] The special régime was set up, and worked on the whole satisfactorily. But the signature of the Franco-Syrian Treaty, which contemplated the establishment of a unitary Syrian State presumably including Alexandretta, impelled the Turks to raise the question once more in September, 1936. The district of Alexandretta, they claimed, contained a Turkish majority, which could not be left to the mercy of an inexperienced Arab nationalist Government in Damascus. They therefore demanded that a separate treaty should be concluded with the Sanjaq. This demand the French Government twice rejected, but it was agreed that the matter should be brought before the League Council in December, 1936. The Council heard both sides of the case but postponed any decision, meanwhile appointing M. Sandler, the Swedish Foreign Minister, *rapporteur* on the question and dispatching three neutral observers to Alexandretta.

After a period of considerable tension and prolonged and difficult negotiations between the French, Turkish and other interested Governments, an agreement was reached, and embodied in the report presented to the Council of the League of Nations by M. Sandler. This report was adopted by the Council on January 27th, 1937. Under its terms, the Sanjaq was recognized to be a distinct entity; it was to enjoy full autonomy in its internal affairs; but its foreign relations were to be conducted by the Syrian Government, and it was to have a fiscal and monetary union with Syria. Turkish was to be an official language, and the Council might determine the conditions of employment of another official language. No international agreement entered into by the Syrian Government, and of such a nature as to affect the independence and sovereignty of Syria, was to apply to the Sanjaq except with the formal consent of the League Council. There was to be

---

[1] See Chapter II.

648 resident in the Sanjaq a delegate nominated by the Council and of French nationality; he was to have the power to suspend for four months, and to refer to the League Council for its definitive decision, governmental acts contrary to the Statute or Fundamental Law of the Sanjaq. The Turkish and French Governments were to be responsible for enforcing, where necessary, the decisions of the League Council. The Sanjaq was to be demilitarized, except for a local police force. There were to be special rights for Turkey in the port of Alexandretta. The report also envisaged a Franco-Turkish treaty guaranteeing the integrity of the Sanjaq; and an agreement between France, Turkey and Syria, guaranteeing the inviolability of the Turco-Syrian frontier and prohibiting, in the territories of Syria and of Turkey respectively, all activities directed against the régimes of the other country.[1]

A committee of experts was set up in February, 1937, to draft a Statute and Fundamental Law for the Sanjaq. It presented its report to the Council in May. Among the various points in the draft Statute and Fundamental Law may be noticed the recommendation that Arabic as well as Turkish should be an official language, and the vesting of legislative power in an Assembly of 40 members, to be elected in two stages by the different communities of the Sanjaq—Turkish, Alawi, Arab,[2] Armenian, Greek Orthodox and Kurdish. The task of devising and controlling the procedure for the registration of electors was to be entrusted to an international commission for the organization and supervision of the first elections.[3]

After some objections on the part of the Turkish Government had been disposed of, the report was accepted by the Council on May 29th, 1937. It was decided that the new régime should come into operation on November 29th. At the same time a Franco-Turkish Treaty was signed guaranteeing the integrity of the Sanjaq, and an Agreement guaranteeing the Turco-Syrian frontier.[4]

The régime duly entered into force on November. 29th Even before that, the international commission appointed by the President of the League Council to supervise the elections had begun its labours. After two months spent in studying the situation on the spot, it returned to Geneva at the end of November, 1937, and set about preparing its report.

---

[1] See Appendix A7.
[2] i.e. Sunni Moslem Arab.
[3] Texts in *Official Journal of the League of Nations*, May–June, 1937, pp. 580–9.
[4] Text in *Official Journal*, May–June, 1937, pp. 838 ff.

These events did not pass unnoticed in Syria. The immediate reaction was a series of Turco-Arab conflicts in the Sanjaq, which continued throughout the year, more than once leading to the intervention of French troops and to loss of life. Throughout Syria the affair gave rise to protests and widespread indignation. It was realized that sooner or later Turkey would ask for the cession of the Sanjaq ; this, it was claimed, would mean a permanent threat to Aleppo and the whole of North Syria. Again, the loss of Alexandretta was a blow to national pride and self-respect, which had been exalted by the Treaty of 1936. Above all, the Alexandretta question was regarded as a test of the policy of Franco-Syrian co-operation. Nationalists, supporters of the Bloc and its opponents alike, watched eagerly to see how France would deal with Turkish demands and threats. Would she be true to her Treaty of Alliance and Friendship with Syria and reject such demands ? Or would she secure the friendship of Turkey, which was so important to her in view of a possible Franco-Italian conflict, by a concession made at Syria's expense ? The settlement of 1937 was regarded throughout Syria as a betrayal by France ; the mood of enthusiasm and co-operation began to pass into one of disillusionment and suspicion ; and the power of the National Bloc began to decline.

The Government had, indeed, done all that it could to defend the rights of the country ; but it could do nothing except protest. Speaking in the Chamber on April 19th, the Prime Minister stated that the League settlement of the Alexandretta question was unacceptable to Syria, but at the same time emphasized the importance for Syria of good relations with its northern neighbour, and of the conclusion of a Franco-Turco-Syrian agreement. Turco-Syrian conversations with a view to making such agreement did indeed begin, but had no positive result.

In May, and again in December, the Syrian Chamber formally refused to recognize the new Statute of the Sanjaq. To this, and to other signs of Syrian dissatisfaction, the Turkish Government replied at the beginning of December by denouncing the Turco-Syrian Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Non-Aggression, signed in 1926.

648 Even before the end of 1937 it was obvious that the Turkish Government, having won its first victory by the establishment of a special régime in the Sanjaq, was determined to take a second step and to secure for the Turkish element a dominant position under that régime. Thus on December 15th, and again on the 24th, it protested to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations against the electoral law drafted by the Commission of experts appointed for that purpose, and more especially against the law's provisions for the registration of voters. According to these provisions, an elector was to be registered in one or other of the recognized communities not simply on the ground of his own unsupported declaration but also in accordance with the evidence furnished by the particulars of his language and religion, which he had to provide. The allotment of seats in the Legislative Assembly was to be proportional to the number of voters registered in the different communities. For the Turks to obtain a majority of seats in the Legislative Assembly, a majority of the voters would have to be registered as Turks. This would not be possible if the recommendations of the Commission were adopted, since those who could by language, religion, and so on, be registered as Turks only amounted to about 39 per cent according to the 1936 figures of the population of the Sanjaq. But if registration were to be by declaration only, and if the Turks could obtain control of the police and of the electoral machinery, a Turkish majority would be possible.

As a consequence of Turkish protests, the League Council on January 28th, 1938, appointed a Committee to consider the Commission's draft law and the Turkish objections to it. This Committee issued the definitive text of the electoral law on March 19th, 1938. It provided that every elector 'shall be presumed to be a member of the community to which he declares himself to belong'. The provisions against intimidation were also set aside. (The English representative on the Commission resigned immediately in protest.)

In May the international commission began to register electors under the revised electoral law. The process was marked by tension, disturbances and bloodshed. By the end of May the Turks had still not succeeded in obtaining a majority. Direct pressure was then brought to bear by the Turkish Government upon the French Government. The latter was in no mood to resist. On June 3rd Franco-Turkish negotiations upon the subject began in Paris, and on the same day martial law was proclaimed in the Sanjaq.

The negotiations in Paris soon led to an agreement that Turkish troops should be allowed to enter the Sanjaq to co-operate with the French in maintaining order. The details of this co-operation were fixed in military conversations held at Antioch during June. In the same month, the Turkish Government announced that it could no longer recognize the status of the electoral commission, and on June 26th the commission abandoned work, accusing the French Mandatory authorities of systematic efforts, by means of arrests and other methods of intimidation, to deprive the non-Turkish part of the population of its freedom of election.

Shortly afterwards, on July 3rd, the conversations at Antioch ended in an agreement for the joint policing of the Sanjaq by Turkish and French troops, until the new régime should be working normally. On July 4th a new Franco-Turkish Treaty of Friendship was initialled in Ankara. It provided not only for mutual non-aggression but for active co-operation in the Eastern Mediterranean.[1] It was to be followed by a tripartite agreement between Turkey, France and Syria. Discussions upon this agreement began in Ankara on July 7th, but after a few days were suspended.

On July 5th Turkish troops marched into the Sanjaq, and towards the end of the month preparations for the election were resumed, under joint Franco-Turkish control. The final electoral lists showed the Turks as constituting 63 per cent of the total number of electors. It was accordingly decided that the Turks should have 22 out of the 40 seats in the Legislative Assembly.

The elections were held, and the new Assembly met for the first time on September 2nd. It elected a Turk as its President, and another Turk as head of the State. A third Turk became Prime Minister, and formed a Cabinet composed entirely of Turks. The Sanjaq was now known as the 'Hatay'.

The effects of these events upon Syrian opinion were mixed. There were some who deduced from it the necessity of attachment to France, and of France's maintaining her hold upon the country as the only bulwark against a Turkish invasion. But others believed that France, now that she had made friends with Turkey, would be less desirous of coming to terms with the Syrian nationalists. In internal politics, the effect was to weaken the position of the Bloc. It was criticized both for not making sufficient efforts to defend Syrian rights, and for not resigning when its efforts proved unsuccessful. The disturbances throughout the country which marked the year were directed as much against the Government as against France, and in June an unsuccessful attempt was made to assassinate the Prime Minister.

---

[1] See Appendix A8.

7

In 1937 Turkey obtained the establishment of a special régime for Alexandretta. In 1938 she secured a dominant voice for the Turkish element under that régime. In 1939 she took the third and last stage and annexed the Sanjaq.

It was indeed obvious that the Turks would not be satisfied with anything short of annexation; and the French Government was not opposed to it in principle; it merely wanted to delay it until the termination of the Mandate over Syria. Turkey, however, demanded an immediate and final settlement of the question.

The first steps towards such a settlement were taken almost immediately after the opening of the Legislative Assembly. With a Turkish Ministry, a Turkish majority in the Assembly, a Turkish army in occupation of the territory, and Turkish officials holding the key positions in the police and the administration, there was no obstacle to the Hatay's adopting the Turkish criminal and civil codes in January, 1939, and the Turkish fiscal, currency and postal systems in the course of the next few weeks. Many of the Arabs and Armenians preferred to abandon their houses and cross the frontier into Syria rather than live any longer under Turkish rule.

The French Government was now more than ever in need of Turkish support in view of the increasing dangers of the international situation. Consequently, when the Turkish Government hinted that only the Alexandretta question prevented the speedy conclusion of such a pact, it met with no opposition in Paris. Negotiations began in April and continued, despite a certain tension when a large Turkish army was reported to be concentrated on the Syrian frontier, until their successful conclusion on June 23rd. On that day there was signed in Paris a Declaration of Mutual Assistance between Turkey and France, including an engagement by 648 France not to alienate her rights in Syria to any third Power. Simultaneously, the agreement for the cession of the Hatay was signed in Ankara, Turkey recognizing the inviolable nature of her frontier with Syria, and promising not to interfere in any way in the affairs of Syria, by propaganda or by any other means.[1]

One month later, the last French troops having left the Hatay, it was finally assimilated to Turkey, becoming Vilayet No. 63 of the Turkish State.

In Syria the cession aroused protests and disturbances. The indignation which these expressed was not so spontaneous as it had been in previous years, because the cession had been so long expected and took no one by surprise; but it was no less real for that.

8

The union of Jebel Druze and the Alawi Territory with 648 Syria, which was agreed upon when the Franco-Syrian Treaty 631 of 1936 was concluded, was effected by decree in December of the same year. Each was to possess a special administrative and financial régime, but otherwise was to be subject to the constitution and laws of the Syrian State. This new system was to come fully into force with the ratification of the Treaty. The statute defining the special régime for each of the districts provided for the appointment of the Governor by the President of the Republic, of other officials in part by the President and in part by the Governor. The latter was to have the power of issuing ordinances, and was to be assisted by an administrative council with an elected majority. Each district was to have its special budget, but was also to make an annual contribution to the State of Syria.[2] Subsequent decrees provided for the representation of the two districts in the Syrian Chamber: Jebel Druze by five Deputies (three Druzes, one Christian and one Beduin), and the Alawi district by 16 (ten representing the Alawis and six the other communities).

In addition to these administrative privileges, a further guarantee for the good treatment of the two districts was contained in the military convention attached to the Treaty of 1936. It provided for the maintenance of French troops in

---

[1] See Appendix A9.

[2] See Appendix A2.

631 648 both districts for a period of five years from the coming into force of the Treaty.

631 664 186 The Treaty and the new régime were received with approval by a number of the Druzes and Alawis; even former autonomists expressed their loyalty to the Syrian Government. This reaction, however, was transient and deceptive. In Jebel Druze discord began to arise early in 1937, after the appointment of Nasib al-Bakri, a Damascene Moslem, as first Governor of the province. A powerful party demanded the appointment of a Druze notable, Hasan al-Atrash, and also a large measure of autonomy; the nationalists asserted that it was encouraged to go to extremes by local French officials. There were also, however, many Druzes who supported the nationalist Government and the Governor whom it had appointed. Attempts were made with no more than a temporary success to reconcile the advocates of separatism with those of unity. The disturbances were not ended until the Governor resigned and was replaced after an interval by Hasan al-Atrash. By the end of 1937 the Jebel was quiet enough to enable Parliamentary elections to be held. The calm continued throughout 1938, but at the beginning of 1939 [669] disturbances began once more. The separatist group accused the Syrian Government of bad faith, expelled Syrian officials from the province and declared the independence of Jebel Druze under the protection of France.

A similar process had meanwhile been occurring in the Alawi district, which was known under the new régime as the Province of Latakia. Here, as in Jebel Druze, there was tranquillity at first, and Parliamentary elections were held in 1937. But the calm was short-lived. The Alawi notables protested against the appointment of Syrian Moslem officials, and more especially of nationalist Governors, first Mazhar Raslan from Homs and then Ihsan al-Jabiri, a Sunni Moslem from Aleppo. The nationalist policy of assimilation was perhaps carried out hastily and tactlessly, the Governor alienated large sections of the population, and at the beginning of 1939 armed bands rose in revolt under the leadership of the deputy Sulaiman Murshid, a brigand who had proclaimed himself 'God' and had secured considerable local influence with the help of certain French officials. At about the same time the visit of the High Commissioner, M. Puaux, was made the occasion for demonstrations in favour of autonomy. Soon

The situation remained as it was until the beginning of 669
1939, when agitation for the release of the kidnappers of the 563
former Governor occurred. In June organized manifestations 631
on a large scale took place in all the towns of the province; but the French authorities intervened and restored order.

10

No sooner had the Franco-Syrian Treaty been signed than 648 criticism of it began to appear in France. In part this criticism came from those who opposed the whole idea of a treaty, believing the Syrians to be still unfit for self-government. Others, while admitting a treaty of some sort to be desirable, were doubtful of the adequacy of the existing Treaty: because it aimed at creating a unitary State in a country so divided as Syria; or because its guarantees for minorities and its provisions for the maintenance of French military forces upon Syrian soil were insufficient; or else because it did not stipulate for the repayment to France of the expenses incurred in the administration of the Mandate.

These doubts were reinforced by the events of 1937: the Alexandretta question, and the growth of the separatist movements in Jebel Druze, the province of Latakia and the Jazirah. It was obvious that the French Chamber and Senate would only ratify the Treaty provided that they were reassured on these and certain other points. The Syrian Prime Minister therefore went to Paris in order to negotiate with the French Government an agreement upon the points at issue. He left Syria in November, 1937, and returned towards the end of December. The result of his visit was an exchange of letters between him and M. de Tessan, Under-Secretary of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated December 11th, 1937. The letters included a further guarantee by the Syrian Government of its intention to respect all the rights granted by the Treaty to the minorities living under its sway; and an undertaking by the Government to accept the technical experts recommended to it by the French Government. The letters closed with a statement of the desire of both parties to continue the policy of co-operation.[1]

These undertakings were accepted by nationalist opinion as being inevitable in the circumstances, and ratification of the Treaty was eagerly awaited. In March, 1938, indeed, Mardam

---

[1] See Appendix A4.

Bey declared to the Chamber that ratification could be expected soon, and received a unanimous vote of confidence in the policy he was pursuing. But as the year grew older, it became more and more obvious that the opposition to the Treaty in France was becoming stronger. Some of the reasons for this were local. The persistence of trouble among the minorities, especially in the Jazirah, aroused the fear of those who were mindful of France's special connexion with the Christians. (Similar fears were expressed on several occasions by members of the Permanent Mandates Commission, who had been deeply affected by the massacre of the Assyrians in Iraq, and blamed themselves for having consented to what they now regarded as a premature termination of the Iraqi Mandate.) Again, the possibility that oil would be discovered in the Jazirah influenced the opinion of those groups which had not forgotten the abandonment of the French claim to Mosul and did not wish to see it repeated in Syria. But the main reasons were not local. On the one hand, the Popular Front Government was replaced by one further to the Right, and including members of groups among whom the main enemies of the Treaty were to be found. On the other, the international situation was growing increasingly dangerous, and it was imperative for France not to weaken her military position in the Eastern Mediterranean. The attitude of Turkey in regard to Alexandretta had shown what dangers might fall upon Syria should France's control be at all relaxed.

Once more Jamil Mardam Bey went to Paris, in an endeavour to save the Treaty even at the price of serious emendations. He left Syria in August, 1938, and, after three months spent in Paris and Geneva, finally signed an agreement with M. Bonnet, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, on November 14th.

The text of the agreement was not revealed at the time, but it was published in full next year by a number of newspapers. It consisted of a 'Protocol' and a 'Joint Declaration'. In the former, the Syrian Government stated the measures by which it proposed to give full effect to the previous agreement of December 11th, 1937. It undertook to guarantee effective liberty of conscience to all, and in particular to recognize the rights of the Christians in matters of personal status. It promised also to safeguard the position of the

French language in the schools; and declared that it had 648 made satisfactory arrangements in regard to the renewal of the concession of the Banque de Syrie and the investigation and exploitation of the country's oil deposits (two matters in which France had an important economic interest). Steps were to be taken to develop Franco-Syrian commerce, and French financial help to be given to the Syrian Government. In view of the interest of both Governments in putting the Treaty into effect as soon as possible, the French Government was willing to fix the end of the period of transition at September 30th, 1939, and would submit this proposal to Parliament. In the 'Joint Declaration', the two signatories expressed their hope that the Syrian Government would give its approval to the amended Treaty by January 20th, 1939, at the latest; and that the French Chamber and Senate would receive the reports of their Foreign Affairs Commission before December 10th, 1938, and would authorize the ratification of the Treaty before January 31st, 1939.[1] There were also military discussions in which General Huntziger, Commander of the French forces in the Levant, participated.

It was too late to save the Treaty, however. In Syria the concessions made by Jamil Mardam Bey were widely regarded as inacceptable, by his own followers as well as by those of Dr. Shahbandar and Shukri al-Quwatli. In France there were some, like M. Bonnet, who supported the amended Treaty on the ground that France could not afford to throw away Syrian friendship and many on the Left who had not abandoned the original Treaty of 1936. A powerful body of opinion, however, was opposed to ratification. The Syrian and Lebanese Treaties were now submitted to the Foreign Affairs Commissions of Chamber and Senate. On December 9th, 1938, the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Senate received the reports of its two 'rapporteurs' on the Treaty. One of them, M. Bergeon, warned against the dangers of a premature ratification; while the other, M. Henry-Haye, went further and declared that the very basis of the Treaty seemed to him incompatible with the interests of France. He proposed, therefore, that France should denounce the Syrian Treaty (as also the Lebanese) and the later agreements, and assume once more the direct administration of the country, until the bases of a new treaty could be thought out. After discussion the

---

[1] See Appendix A5.

646 Commission decided that a letter should be sent to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, emphasizing the importance of interrupting the process of transition provided for in the agreements.

Later in the same month M. Gaston Riou, the 'rapporteur' on the Syrian and Lebanese Treaties to the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Chamber, made a statement on the Treaties to a Beirut newspaper. He did not, he said, object to the Lebanese Treaty in principle, and such changes in it as were necessary could easily be made; but the whole conception of the Syrian Treaty was wrong. France had tried to make a unitary treaty with the least unitary nation in the world; Syria was a 'League of Nations' and needed a confederation.

In the face of such signs of Parliamentary opposition, M. Bonnet abandoned his intention of submitting the Treaty to Parliament. On December 14th, 1938, he declared to the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Chamber that the Government did not intend for the present to ask Parliament to ratify the Syrian Treaty. France, he stated, did not wish to modify the situation in the Mediterranean at the moment. (It was exactly a month since he had signed the 'Joint Declaration' with the Syrian Prime Minister.)

Such statements made it clear that even with the additional undertakings the Treaty had very little chance of ratification in France. On December 31st, 1938, the Syrian Chamber adopted unanimously an order of the day defining its attitude to France. While desirous of an alliance with France, it stood firm by the Treaty of 1936; it regarded as null and void any agreements not submitted to it for ratification; it regretted the failure of the French Government to stand by its commitments and charged the Syrian Government to watch over the rights, independence and unity of Syria, and to take full powers into its hands without delay; it took note of the Prime Minister's declaration that he did not consider himself bound by any agreement that he had signed; it asked the Syrians not to co-operate with any commission which might be sent out by the French Government; and it called upon the Government to deal promptly with the acts of rebellion against law and order that were occurring in the Jebel Druze, Latakia and the Jazirah.[1]

This motion marked the beginning of the political crisis of 1939, which led to the dissolution of the National Bloc, the

---

[1] For text, see Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Rapport*, 1938, pp. 3–4.

suspension of the Constitution and the complete breakdown 648
of the policy of 1936.

II

The Bloc was the more incapable of weathering such a 665
crisis, because by now there had appeared a strong nationalist opposition to it. Already in 1936 such a potential opposition had existed ready to take shape so soon as, on the one hand, the Bloc disappointed hopes, and on the other an alternative leader or group of leaders appeared. At the time neither of the two conditions was fulfilled. The Bloc was at the height of its success; and the few Deputies who opposed it were neither prominent nor strong enough to become popular leaders.

During the next few years, however, matters changed. The Bloc gradually lost a great part of its popularity, on account of its failure to secure the ratification of the Treaty and its impotence in the face of Turkish designs upon Alexandretta. The natural tendency of Governments in office to disappoint individual hopes and create individual grievances worked in the same direction.

The discontent was increased by the comparative failure of 631
the Government in internal administration. Among the 642
causes of failure were the inadequate powers of the Govern- 648
ment, the widespread belief that it did not enjoy the backing of the French authorities, its own lack of experience and the absence of an efficient civil service; but it was nevertheless discouraging to its supporters and irritating to ordinary citizens. On the whole the departments were no better administered than they had been; and there was a succession of petty acts of discrimination against members of minorities. The relations between the central and local authorities were often difficult, the tendency to excessive centralization conflicting with the innate localism of some of the provinces. This conflict had indeed existed before the nationalists came to power, and in order to end it, the High Commissioner had issued a decree on provincial organization in January, 1936. Besides altering the number and boundaries of the provinces, this decree had defined the scope of the central and local authorities and provided for the establishment of provincial councils. In spite of declarations, this decree was never fully applied.

648 Another failure, for which however the Syrian Government was by no means exclusively to blame, was the breakdown of negotiations with Lebanon on the future of the customs and other departments known collectively as the 'Common Interests' and at the time administered by the High Commissioner. The Treaties, it will be recalled, anticipated negotiations between the Syrian and Lebanese Governments on the disposal of these interests when the Mandate should come to an end. The Governments might either set up a joint organization to administer them or agree each to retain its liberty of action; and the Mandatory Power bound itself to act in conformity with the decision of the Governments, and transfer the interests either to whatever new organization was set up or to the two Governments.

Syro-Lebanese negotiations on the subject took place in August, 1937. The two Governments agreed on the principle of separate customs administrations, without prejudice to the close economic relations existing between Syria and Lebanon. In later discussions, however, they failed to agree on the method of applying this principle and in particular on the proportion of the customs revenues to be allotted to each of the two Governments. In 1938, as a consequence of this failure to agree, the Syrian Government decided to impose a tax on Lebanese products, and the Lebanese Government retaliated. These measures were much opposed by business interests, and were never effectively carried out; but the disagreement continued until after the outbreak of the war.

To these particular grievances was added the general unrest caused on the one hand by the economic dislocations resulting from successive devaluations of the franc, and on the other by the Arab revolt in Palestine (1936-1939). This revolt aroused great enthusiasm in Syria, and helped to drive the nationalist movement along the path of extremism and violence, both because of the close links between Syria and Palestine and because of the presence in Syria and Lebanon of a large number of Arab nationalist refugees who had found it impossible to remain in Palestine. It was in Syria that the Pan-Arab Conference of 1937 was held. Lebanon became the home of the Mufti of Jerusalem after the suppression of the Arab High Committee in 1938; and to a great extent the revolt in its later stages was directed by Palestinian

1 refugees and Syrian sympathizers through the Committee for

the Defence of Palestine, in Damascus. Nationalists in Syria 648 regarded the struggle of the Palestinian Arabs as their own struggle; and their opposition to French policy was strengthened and sustained by the constant thought of the battle which their fellow-countrymen were waging against Zionism and the policy of the Balfour Declaration.

The conditions for the growth of an opposition now existed. 665 Its leader was found in Dr. Abdur-Rahman Shahbandar. A well-educated, intelligent and masterful Damascene, he had been Foreign Minister under Faisal, and had played an important part in the revolt of 1925-1926. Sentenced to death by the French, he had taken up residence in Egypt. He returned to Syria after the amnesty to the political exiles in May, 1937. This first visit of his lasted only a month, but he found time publicly to declare his opposition to the party of the National Bloc—an opposition due partly perhaps to his disbelief in the policy of co-operation with the French, but partly also, there can be no doubt, to pique at seeing the leadership of the nationalist movement in other hands than his.

He was absent from Syria for the rest of the year 1937, but at the end of the year he came out into the open with a manifesto accusing Jamil Mardam Bey of having made inacceptable concessions to the French Government during his recent visit to Paris, and of having done nothing to defend Syrian rights in Alexandretta. He soon gathered around him a number of those who for one reason or another were dissatisfied with the Government of the Bloc.

In February, 1938, the Government replied to Dr. Shahbandar's memorandum by arresting his leading supporters, on the charge of having distributed a seditious manifesto repeating his accusations. Despite their denial of the charge, they were all sentenced to several months' detention, but the sentences were reduced after a re-trial.

Two months later, the crystallization of Dr. Shahbandar's supporters into a definite political group was marked by the issue of a manifesto, signed by Zaki al-Khatib in the name of the 'Free National Front'. It stated that any interference in the internal affairs of Syria on the pretext of defending minorities would be regarded as an infringement of national sovereignty; that any detachment of Syrian territory in order to transfer it to another State or to retain it under the Mandate would be considered an infraction of the Treaty;

Against the opposition of these two youth-movements, the 665 Bloc's own organization, the Nationalist Youth, was almost powerless. It had taken a leading part in the disturbances of 1936, but when the leaders of the Bloc came to power it proved more of a nuisance than an asset and was quietly silenced by them.

12

The final crisis was delayed for a time by the arrival of the 648 new French High Commissioner, M. Gabriel Puaux, who had been chosen to succeed M. de Martel in the previous October. M. Puaux left France for Syria at the beginning of January, 1939. The belief that he was coming to bury the Treaty explains why, when M. Puaux landed at Beirut on January 8th, his arrival was marked by some enthusiasm in Lebanon, but by hostility and manifestations in favour of Syrian unity in the cities of the interior. The tension was heightened rather than relieved by a broadcast speech of the High Commissioner on January 11th, in which he reminded the nationalists that France had a mission to maintain order and justice in the Levant, and that 'were she to withdraw or her forces to be weakened, Syrian patriots would see their dearest dreams disappear.'

Shortly afterwards M. Puaux made his first visit to Damascus. It was marked by strikes, and other measures of protest against the failure of the French Parliament to ratify the Treaty. A ministerial crisis seemed imminent; but after heated discussions in the Chamber, it was agreed that the Ministry should remain in office and no steps be taken until M. Puaux had had time to study the situation and form his opinion upon it.

M. Puaux spent the remainder of January visiting the different parts of the country. Disturbances and tension continued, and he had hardly completed his travels when a crisis occurred.

In March, 1936, the High Commissioner had issued a decree determining the rights of the officially recognized religious communities in matters of personal status, and the relations between the communities. It aroused considerable opposition in orthodox Moslem circles, partly because they believed its provisions to be contrary to those of Islamic law, but more fundamentally because it treated the Moslems as one sect

648 among many, and thus struck at the root of the traditional Moslem conception of the State. Its application was temporarily suspended, pending the issue of a revised law by the Syrian Government. The Government having failed to pass such a law, in November, 1938, the High Commissioner issued a decree modifying and completing the previous one. The new decree, officially published in December, met with no greater favour from the religious leaders.

Throughout the first weeks of 1939 Moslem opposition to the decree grew in intensity. Pressure was put upon the Government to suspend it. This the Government was the more willing to do because it resented the issue of the decree on the High Commissioner's own authority, over the head of the legislative organs of the Syrian State. In February it issued an order to the Courts not to apply the decree. At the same time it sent a memorandum to the High Commissioner, declaring its intention to apply the order of the day passed by the Chamber on December 31st, 1938, and to take over the functions previously exercised by the Mandatory authorities; accusing the French of encouraging the separatist movements; and asserting that since all legislative power belonged to the Chamber, decrees issued by the High Commissioner could have no validity in Syria.

648 On February 18th, the High Commissioner demanded 645 that the Ministry should withdraw its order to the Courts and its memorandum, on the ground that decrees issued by him could not be suspended by any authority other than his own. The Ministry refused and resigned. A number of important officials resigned with it. The National Bloc continued formally in existence, but the resignation of the Mardam Ministry made its temporary decline inevitable. In April a group of prominent members left it.

13

Jamil Mardam Bey was succeeded as Prime Minister by Lutfi al-Haffar, his former colleague; with one exception, all the members of the new Ministry were members of the Bloc; and their policy, like that of their predecessors, was to maintain the Treaty of 1936, and to conclude an agreement with France on the basis of it. This, together with the continued deadlock over the communities question and further troubles among the minorities, did not allow the Ministry to last long. It resigned on March 16th, in circumstances 648 somewhat similar to those in which the Mardam Ministry had 646 fallen. Its resignation was accompanied by further disturbances.

The unrest, and the difficulty of finding anybody willing and able to form a new Ministry, impelled the Mandatory authorities to take over, by decree of the High Commissioner, the powers necessary for the maintenance of public order. The disturbances were quelled by the use of French troops; several prominent leaders were arrested, including Nabih al-Azmah. New and severe restrictions were also placed upon the press. But at the same time a concession to popular feeling was made by the decision of the High Commissioner, at the beginning of April, to suspend the application of the Communities Statute to the Sunni Moslem community.

A few days later, on April 6th, the Ministerial crisis was ended by the formation of a non-political Ministry, headed by Nasuhi al-Bukhari. Although its members did not belong to the Bloc, this Ministry was as firmly attached as its predecessors had been to the Treaty of 1936; and it was generally felt that it offered the French Government its last chance of concluding an agreement that could satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Syrians. If it failed to take this opportunity, there would be no alternative for the nationalists except to resort once more to the methods of the first months of 1936.

Shortly after the formation of the Bukhari Ministry, M. 648 Puaux left Syria for France. It was known that he had gone in order to discuss with the French Government the policy to be adopted in Syria. Speculation ranged over the alternatives among which a choice would have to be made: the negotiation of a new Treaty, the return to direct rule by the French, the establishment of a monarchy. This last possibility especially was the subject of much excited controversy and the names of various possible candidates were put forward: the Amir Abdullah, the Amir Abdul Munim, son of the ex-Khedive of Egypt, a Sa'udi or a Tunisian prince. Even the possibility of a personal union of Syria and Iraq under King Faisal II was entertained.

On May 10th, the High Commissioner returned from France and three days later delivered a radio speech, in which he declared that the French Government was determined to

648 reach an agreement with Syria on the basis of the 1936 Treaty with the amendments of November, 1938, but that due satisfaction must be given to the legitimate aspirations of the minorities. Moreover, the international situation necessitated new military arrangements between Syria and France. He ended with an appeal for the maintenance of law and order.

The nationalists saw in this statement a determination to strengthen France's hold over Syria in preparation for the imminent world war. The last hope of the ratification of the Treaty was now extinguished.

648 On May 15th the Bukhari Ministry resigned. On May
645 23rd the Syrian Chamber voted unanimously an order of the day, affirming Syria's sympathy for French democracy in the hour of its peril, but at the same time emphasizing its attachment to the unamended Treaty of 1936 as the only firm basis for Franco-Syrian co-operation.

This time there was no way out of the deadlock. All attempts to form a new Ministry failed. Finally, the President of the Republic resigned (July 7th). A few days later M. Puaux took the extreme step of dissolving the Chamber, suspending the Constitution, and appointing a non-political Council of Directors to govern by decree-laws under his own direction (July 10th). The Council was composed of permanent officials, with Bahij al-Khatib as its President.

14

631 At the same time the High Commissioner issued decrees
648 re-establishing in Jebel Druze and the Territory of Latakia separate administrations similar to those which had existed until 1936, and providing for the special administration of the Jazirah.

The decree for Latakia stated that the Organic Law promulgated in 1936 was to be replaced by a new one, to come into force immediately. The new law provided for the government of the region by a Governor, assisted by a council of heads of departments and by the Council of the Territory. He was to be appointed by the head of the Syrian State on the nomination of the Council of the Territory, was to hold office for five years and might be re-appointed. His powers were executive, financial and within limits legislative. The Council was to consist of at least seventeen elected members, to hold two ordinary sessions a year and to discuss financial and other matters, without, however, possessing much power of independent decision. The Territory was to enjoy financial autonomy, apart from a contribution to the expenses of general administration of the State of Syria. It was also to have judicial autonomy, except for the provisions that the Presidents of the High Court and the Court of First Instance at Latakia, both of them French magistrates, were to be appointed by the head of the Syrian State on the nomination of the French Government; and that conflicts of competence between the Courts of the Territory and those of other parts of the French Mandated area were to be decided by the Court of Cassation at Damascus.

The provisions of the decree relating to the Jebel Druze were virtually the same, with a few minor variations. That for the Jazirah removed the province from the control of the Syrian Government, and placed it under the direct rule of the High Commissioner's Delegate at Hassetche. (This measure was enough to end the disturbances. By December, 1940, life in the Jazirah had returned to normal, and it was possible for an agreement to be reached between the Mandatory authorities and the Syrian Government, under the terms of which the functions of Governor were once more transferred from the High Commissioner's Delegate to a Syrian official.)[1]

---

[1] See Appendix A6.

XII. THE SECOND WORLD WAR, 1939-1943

I

648
722
THE outbreak of war brought immediate changes in every sphere of life, in Syria and Lebanon as in the other countries involved. For months past reinforcements had been arriving for the French army of occupation. At the beginning of the war the important part for which the forces in the Mandated Territories were cast was shown by the appointment of General Weygand as Commander-in-Chief of the French Forces in the Levant. Other measures were taken to place the Territories in a state of defence. The urgency of the situation was somewhat eased, however, by the decision of the Italian Government to remain neutral.

Various political measures were also taken to ensure the safety of the country. In Lebanon the High Commissioner dissolved the Chamber, dismissed the Ministry, suspended the Constitution and confided the administration to a Secretary of State directly responsible to the President of the Republic. In Syria, a number of political organizations believed to be favourable to the enemies of France were dissolved, and some of their leading members were arrested. During the next few months many of them were sentenced by military tribunals to terms of imprisonment, in some cases exceedingly long, on charges of subversive action and conspiracy. Those affected were mainly members of uncompromising nationalist organizations or of the Communist Party; no leader either of the National Bloc or of the Shahbandarist group was touched. Most leading personalities indeed gave formal expression to their attachment to France and to democracy, and their unwillingness to do anything which might hinder the victory of the Allied arms.

In spite of formal statements by political leaders, the general attitude of the population towards the war seems to have been one not of enthusiasm but of mingled fear and apathy. There was fear of a repetition of the terrible experiences of the war of 1914-1918: famine, disease and the reign of terror. Except among the Francophil elements, people tended to think that, although the belligerents might invoke the noblest of principles to justify their taking up arms, in reality all were equally moved by self-interest, and that from the point of view of the exploited nations of the East there was nothing to choose between the oppression exercised in the name of democracy 722 and that exercised in the name of Fascism. This tendency was 648 encouraged by the efforts of the competing propaganda services, each of which purported to unmask the true face of the other party. Moreover, painful memories remained of the conduct of the Allies during the last war. The Arabs had trusted to Allied promises then and had been, as they saw it, cheated. They were therefore sceptical, and afraid to give their full trust to either side. Still more bitter were the memories of the years immediately preceding the outbreak of war: the cession of Alexandretta, the failure to ratify the Syrian and Lebanese Treaties, and above all the Arab revolt in Palestine, which had aroused intense feeling throughout Arab Asia, and had done more than anything else to alienate the Arabs from the Allied Powers.

These and other currents of political feeling existed beneath the surface, but there was little overt political activity during the first nine months of the war. The High Commissioner and the Syrian and Lebanese authorities confined themselves mainly to measures of administrative reform and economic and financial control; the safeguarding of the food supply against the activities of hoarders and profiteers was their constant preoccupation. In external affairs one source of anxiety was removed by the conclusion in November, 1939, of the Anglo-Franco-Turkish Pact, and in March, 1940, of a Turco-Syrian Agreement of Friendship and Good Neighbourliness. But a new anxiety grew up, with the German offensive on the Western front in May, 1940, and the entry of Italy into the war in June; it reflected itself in the additional measures of precaution taken in the Mandated Territories.

2

After the capitulation of France there was some doubt about 721 the attitude which the French authorities in the Levant 648 would adopt. It was resolved by the order of the day issued on June 27th by General Mittelhauser, who had succeeded Weygand after the latter had been recalled to take command of the Allied Forces in France. 'According to the terms of the French armistice', he announced, 'there will be no change in the status of the Mandated Territories. Consequently, the cessation of hostilities has been ordered. The French flag

721/ will continue to be flown in these territories, and France will
648 carry on her mission in the Levant.'

The cessation of hostilities had the gravest effect upon the Allied position in the Middle East, and occasioned great anxiety to the British Government. At the beginning of July the Foreign Office issued the following statement:

'His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom understand that General Mittelhauser, the Commander-in-Chief of the French Forces in the Levant, has stated that hostilities have ceased in Syria. His Majesty's Government assume that this does not mean that if Germany or Italy sought to occupy Syria or the Lebanon and were to try to do so in the face of British command of the sea, no attempt would be made by the French forces to oppose them. In order, however, to set at rest doubts which may be felt in any quarter, His Majesty's Government declare that they could not allow Syria or the Lebanon to be occupied by any hostile Power or to be used as a base for attacks upon those countries in the Middle East which they are pledged to defend, or to become the scene of such disorder as to constitute a danger to those countries.

'They therefore hold themselves free to take whatever measures they may in such circumstances consider necessary in their own interests. Any action which they may hereafter be obliged to take in fulfilment of this declaration will be entirely without prejudice to the future status of the territories now under French Mandate.'[1]

Subsequent developments increased the anxiety of the British Government. In August an Italian Armistice Commission arrived in Beirut; in spite of official disclaimers, its object was generally believed to be to prepare the way for the occupation of Syria and Lebanon by the Axis Powers. It was generally unpopular and had little success; by the end of the year it had practically faded out of the picture. More important was the unobtrusive extension of German influence throughout the country; and also the gradual replacement of officials believed to have democratic or pro-British sympathies by others thought to be in agreement with the 'New Order' in France and Europe. In November the High Commissioner himself was recalled and replaced first by M. Chiappe and then, after his death when the aeroplane carrying him to the East was shot down in the

---

[1] *The Times*, July 2nd, 1941.

Mediterranean, by General Dentz. These measures could not, 648 however, prevent the spread of pro-Allied sympathies both in the army and in the civil administration; towards the end of 1940 a number of those suspected of having such sympathies were arrested and interned.

While Axis interference was increasing, Franco-British relations in the Levant as elsewhere were becoming ever more strained. The British blockade was extended to Syria and Lebanon, trade between which and the neighbouring Arab countries greatly diminished in consequence. Travel between Palestine and the French Mandated Territories was severely restricted. The French authorities prohibited public listening to British radio programmes. From time to time, moreover, the French authorities issued statements to the effect that the French army of the Levant still existed and was prepared to defend French territory against aggression from whatever direction it might come.

3

Among the population, the effect of the French capitulation 648 and of subsequent events was not so much to bring new /196 tendencies into existence as to encourage those which already existed. The growth of Axis influence and of British determination to oppose it increased the fear that the country would become a battleground. The restriction of trade with Palestine, Iraq and Egypt, and the persistence of hoarding and profiteering in spite of all measures taken to stop them, brought nearer the spectre of famine. The ambiguous position of France after the Armistice made it even more difficult than before for Syrians and Lebanese to take sides in the war. There were, it is true, a small number who approved of the New Order in France, and extreme nationalists who desired a German victory; there were others who, from principle or interest, desired a British occupation of the country. But for the majority of politically conscious Syrians, the collapse of France and her subsequent difficulties served not so much to throw them into the arms of her former ally or her former enemy, as to make them more than ever eager to rid themselves of French and all foreign domination. They felt it a humiliation to be subjected to a defeated and weak nation; and with the withdrawal of France from the League

648 of Nations on April 18th, 1941, they regarded the juridical
186 basis of French Mandatory rule as having disappeared.

Political meetings and demonstrations being forbidden, nationalist uneasiness remained for the most part beneath the surface throughout 1940. But it revealed itself in the press of other Arab countries and the activities of their Governments; this was especially true of Iraq. Thus in July, 1940, Nuri as-Said, then Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, visited Ankara, Beirut and Damascus in order to discuss with the Turkish and French authorities and with prominent Syrians and Lebanese the future of the French Mandated Territories. At the conclusion of his journey he issued a statement to the effect that both the Turkish and Iraqi Governments thought that Syria should be for the Syrians and that the country should enjoy complete independence.

665 A symptom of the prevalent unrest was the murder of Dr.
662 Shahbandar in Damascus in the same month, while his political influence was at its height. Within a few days his assassins were arrested. After the preliminary investigation had been completed a special tribunal was set up to try them and certain other persons believed to be implicated in the crime. Among the latter were three of the leaders of the National Bloc, Jamil Mardam Bey, Saadullah al-Jabiri and Lutfi al-Haffar. They were accused of deliberate complicity in the assassination. Almost at the same time as the accusation against them was published, all three left Syria for Baghdad.

The trial of the accused persons began in December, 1940. In the course of it the leader of the assassins made a complete confession: their motive in deciding to kill Dr. Shahbandar had been religious, since they regarded him as one of those responsible for the decay of Islam; they had tried to throw the blame for their crime upon the leaders of the Bloc, who in reality had had nothing to do with it. The trial ended at the beginning of January, with the condemnation of six persons to death and several others to imprisonment, and the complete exoneration of Jamil Mardam Bey, Lutfi al-Haffar and Saadullah al-Jabiri. The sentences were carried out immediately.

4

000 At the beginning of 1941 the unrest which had been for so

At the beginning of 1941 the unrest which had been for so long latent came to a head. Strikes and demonstrations 668 began in the Syrian towns in February, in protest against the 664 dearth of essential foodstuffs and the failure of the authorities to stop profiteering. They very soon turned into political disturbances, directed by a number of nationalist committees and leaders, and above all by Shukri al-Quwatli, who in March issued a manifesto setting forth their objectives. He condemned the existing Government of Bahij al-Khatib as a group of men whose sentiments were not those of the population; he declared that the legal basis of French rule no longer existed since the League of Nations had ceased to function; and he therefore demanded the immediate formation of a national Government. Shortly afterwards, in consequence of the continuation of the disturbances, which indeed spread for a few days from Syria to the towns of the Lebanese coast, the Government of Bahij al-Khatib resigned. There [645] was a temporary cessation of unrest while the High Commissioner negotiated with Shukri al-Quwatli and others for the formation of a more representative Government; but disturbances broke out once more after the failure of the negotiations.

The recrudescence of the troubles appears to have convinced 648 General Dentz of the necessity of making further concessions. 668 At the beginning of April he broadcast a statement to the Syrian people, setting forth the conclusions to which his conversations with Syrian leaders had led him. First, the independence of Syria remained the aim towards which the Syrians were striving; France was in agreement with this, but the present international situation made it impossible to contemplate a definitive settlement of the problem of the form of government in Syria. Secondly, Syrian public opinion was demanding the establishment of a Government endowed with wider powers. Thirdly, there was a need for an economic and social programme which would help to solve the problems of unemployment, the food supply, agriculture and commerce. In the light of these conclusions the High Commissioner had decided upon the following measures: the replacement of the Council of Directors by a Ministry presided over by a 'Head of the Government'; the formation of an Advisory Assembly, to be composed of representatives of the political, cultural and economic life of the country and of the younger generation, and in which the Druzes and Alawis would also be represented

648 while retaining their special Statutes; the establishment of a
668 Council of State to draft legislation; the participation of the Syrian Government in the organization of the food supply for Syria and Lebanon; and the execution of an important programme of public works. 'The day of fulfilment is at hand and existing difficulties will be resolved by the co-operation of all and not by demonstrations in the streets. The Syrian nation wishes to carry on its work in an orderly and peaceful manner. Order and peace shall be safeguarded.'[1]

645 A few days later a prominent business man and member of a leading Damascene family, Khalid al-Azm, was appointed Prime Minister, with a Ministry most of the members of which, like the Prime Minister himself, had not previously taken a prominent part in the political life of Syria. In its programme the new Government promised to reform the administration, to develop external trade, to pay special attention to the problems of education and youth, to ameliorate the lot of the workers and officials, and to preserve strict non-partisanship in all political matters.

Shortly afterwards a similar change took place in Lebanon. The President of the Republic and the Secretary of State resigned their offices, and were replaced by a politically neutral Ministry headed by Alfred Naccache, a Maronite judge who had hitherto played no important part in politics.

5

648 During these uncertain months the true centre of Syrian
668 political life was Baghdad. It has already been made clear how united is political feeling in the different centres of the Fertile Crescent. The Palestinian Revolt of 1936-1939 had received encouragement and help from the neighbouring Arab countries; and after it subsided the thought persisted that the sorrows of Palestine, and also the sorrows of Syria, could only be ended by a united effort of the whole Arab people. It was also widely believed that in this effort Iraq would have to play the leading part, since it possessed greater freedom of action than most of the other Arab regions, and also the nucleus of a trained army. The sense that the destiny of their nation depended on them exalted the spirits of a certain group among the Iraqi Arabs; and their enthusiasm was further increased by the teaching of the

---

[1] See Appendix A10.

many Syrians and Palestinians, teachers, government officials 648
and political exiles, who thronged Baghdad in the first years 668
of the war. To the general Arab unrest there were added particular Iraqi grievances; and both were encouraged to express themselves violently by the comparative failure of British arms in 1940 and 1941 and the great though temporary influence of German propaganda. Finally, when the general position of the war seemed most propitious, Rashid Ali raised the banner of revolt. He was supported by some, although by no means all, of the nationalists in other Arab countries; in imagination they saw the revolt not as a seizure of power by the Army but as a protest of the Arabs against British policy in Palestine and French in Syria. When the revolt failed, a wave of doubt and self-criticism swept over the nationalist ranks, in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine, no less than in Iraq.

6

These events were swiftly followed by others of even greater 648
import. Ever since the French capitulation German agents 926
had been active in Syria and Lebanon. In the first months of 1941 German influence was thought to be increasing rapidly and alarmingly; and it was believed that the completion of her Balkan campaign had brought nearer the possibility of a gradual infiltration of German troops and agents into the French Mandated Territories, until finally Germany would be able to obtain complete control of them. Her forces would then be in a position to threaten the British armies in Palestine and Egypt, and Turkey to the north.

The danger was brought to a head by the outbreak of the Iraqi insurrection in May. German aircraft were permitted by the Government of Vichy to use Syrian air-bases as stages on their journey to Iraq; and it was obvious to those who had studied German methods of infiltration that this was the beginning of a process which would, unless forestalled, soon take on such proportions that to check it would be of the greatest difficulty.

It therefore came as no surprise to the general public when June 8th, 1941, a mixed force of Imperial, Free French and other Allied troops crossed the frontiers of Syria and Lebanon; the whole force was under the command of General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson and the Free French contingent under that

648 of General Catroux. General Dentz's troops put up an
726 unexpectedly strong resistance. It had been generally hoped that it would be nominal or else would be overcome without much difficulty, on account of the supposed bad state of morale among the French troops, the alleged poor condition of their equipment, the repatriation of a large part of the army of the Levant to France after the Armistice, the defection of a number of officers and men to the Free French cause, and the pro-British sympathies of certain elements in the population. This hope was not fulfilled. General Dentz's troops resisted strongly, for a number of reasons: because of hostility to Great Britain and Free France and suspicion of their intentions; from professional pride and the desire to wipe out the shame of the French capitulation of 1940; because the policy of Vichy included the defence of the Empire against all attacks upon it; and because of severe disciplinary measures taken by General Dentz in the weeks preceding the attack.

The Allied advance was made in several columns, some of which entered the country from Palestine and Transjordan in the south, and the others from Iraq in the east. Of the columns advancing from the south, one took the coastal road, with Beirut as its goal; a second went northwards from Metullah into the region beneath the western slopes of Hermon, heading towards the Biqa', the valley between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, in which lies the air-base of Rayaq; a third advanced towards Damascus by way of Quneitra; and others towards Damascus through the Hauran. Of the columns which invaded Syria from Iraq, one struck across the desert towards Palmyra and then towards Homs and the roads and railway which run north and south connecting the great towns of the interior; another moved up the course of the Euphrates towards Dair az-Zor and then south-west to Palmyra; and a third westwards along the northern frontier, towards Aleppo. The northward and westward movements tended to converge as the columns moved forward, pushing the enemy forces before them towards the north-western section of the country. In the first days of the campaign the forces from the south captured Sur, Dera' and Merjayun and advanced beyond them. But the further they went the fiercer the resistance to them grew; they captured Kiswe, a few miles south of Damascus, but there they were halted, while the French forces launched a counter-attack and on June 16th recaptured

726 648 Quneitra and Merjayun. They were dislodged from the former in a few hours, but from the latter only after more than a week of heavy fighting on June 24th. By that time the other columns had made considerable progress; on June 20th the deciding battle for Damascus was fought. An Indian brigade penetrated after hard fighting into the suburbs of Mezze to the west of Damascus; the Australians following in support took Fort Gouraud. In the face of this threat from the west and pressure from Free French columns to the south and east General Dentz ordered the evacuation of the city. Free French troops under Colonel Collet led the Allied entry of June 21st. In the next few days a rapid advance was made north of Damascus by Allied troops, while those moving westwards through the desert drew nearer to the railway and Aleppo, Homs and Hama; and those on the coastal road continued their approach upon Beirut, in spite of heavy resistance at Damur and elsewhere.

By the beginning of July the end of the campaign was in sight. On July 8th General Dentz was forced to ask for terms; and after several days of negotiations, an Armistice Convention was initialled at Acre on July 12th and signed on the 14th. Allied forces were to occupy Syrian and Lebanese territory; the French forces were to be accorded the full honours of war; all war material was either to be transferred to the British authorities or to be destroyed under their supervision; prisoners of war were to be released; the free choice between rallying to the Allied cause and being repatriated was to be left to individuals on the French side; the rights of French cultural institutions were to be respected; all public services, means of communication, port installations, naval establishments, ships, aircraft, air installations, and equipment and fuel stocks were to be handed over intact; and no reprisals were to be taken by the British authorities against Syrians or Lebanese who had been involved in the recent hostilities in a military or official capacity. The execution of the Convention was to be supervised by a commission of control, of which three members, including the President, were to be nominated by the British authorities and the other two by the Vichy French authorities.[1]

---

[1] See Appendix A13.

In the period which has elapsed between the Allied invasion of Syria and Lebanon and the present day, a number of statements have been issued for the purpose of defining the policy which Free France should follow in the Mandated Territories, her attitude to the inhabitants and her relations with Great Britain. 648

The intentions of the Free French towards the Syrians and Lebanese were stated on the day on which the invasion began, in the proclamation issued by General Catroux:

> 'Inhabitants of Syria and Lebanon!
>
> 'At the moment when the forces of Free France, united to the forces of the British Empire, her ally, are entering your territory, I declare that I assume the powers, responsibilities and duties of the representative of France in the Levant. I do this in the name of Free France, which is the traditional and real France, and in the name of her Chief, General de Gaulle. In this capacity I come to put an end to the mandatory régime and to proclaim you free and independent.
>
> 'You will therefore be from henceforward sovereign and independent peoples, and you will be able either to form yourselves into separate States or to unite into a single State. In either event, your independent and sovereign status will be guaranteed by a Treaty in which our mutual relations will be defined. This Treaty will be negotiated as soon as possible between your representatives and myself. Pending its conclusion our mutual position will be one of close unity in pursuit of a common ideal and common aims.
>
> 'Inhabitants of Syria and Lebanon, you will see from this declaration that if the Free French and British forces cross your frontier, it is not to take away your liberty, it is to ensure it. It is to drive out of Syria the forces of Hitler. It is to prevent the Levant from becoming an enemy base directed against the British and against ourselves.
>
> 'We who are fighting for the liberty of peoples cannot allow the enemy to subjugate your country step by step, obtain control of your persons and your belongings, and turn you into slaves. We cannot allow the populations which France has promised to defend to fall into the hands of the

most wanton and pitiless master that history has known. We cannot allow the age-long interests of France in the Levant to be handed over to the enemy.

'Inhabitants of Syria and Lebanon! If, in answer to our appeal, you rally to us, you should know that the British Government in agreement with Free France has promised to grant you all the advantages enjoyed by the free countries which are associated with them. Thus the blockade will be lifted and you will enter into immediate relations with the sterling bloc, which will give you enormous advantages from the point of view of your imports and exports. You will be able to buy and sell freely with all the free countries.

'Inhabitants of Syria and Lebanon! A great hour in your history has struck. France declares you independent by the voice of her sons who are fighting for her life and for the liberty of the world.'[1]

Simultaneously, the British Ambassador in Cairo, Sir Miles Lampson, made the following statement in the name of the British Government:

'General Catroux, on behalf of General de Gaulle, Chief of the Free French, has issued a declaration to the inhabitants of Syria and Lebanon before advancing with the object of expelling the Germans. In this he declares the liberty and independence of Syria and Lebanon. He undertakes to negotiate a treaty to ensure these objects.

'I am authorized by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to declare that they support and associate themselves with the assurance of independence given by General Catroux on behalf of General de Gaulle to Syria and Lebanon.

'I am also authorized to give you the assurance that should you support and join the Allies, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom offer you all the advantages enjoyed by free countries who are associated with them. The blockade will be lifted and you may enter into immediate relations with the sterling bloc, which will give you enormous, besides immediate, advantages from the point of view of your exports and imports. You will be able to sell your products and to buy freely in all the free countries.'[2]

---

[1] For the French text, see Appendix A11.

[2] *The Times*, June 9th, 1941.

8

On June 24th, after the capture of Damascus, General de 648 Gaulle issued two decrees, the one nominating General Catroux Commander-in-Chief of the Troops of the Levant, and the other appointing him 'Delegate-General and Plenipotentiary' of the Chief of the Free French for the States of the Levant. (This title was to replace that of High Commissioner.) In a letter to General Catroux announcing these appointments, General de Gaulle laid down the main lines of the policy which he was to adopt in regard to Syrian and Lebanese independence.

> 'You are going to exercise your powers and functions in my name and in that of the Council of Defence of the French Empire. Your mission will consist particularly in restoring the economic situation in the Levant as rapidly and completely as the circumstances of the war permit; in negotiating with the qualified representatives of the interested peoples treaties establishing the independence and sovereignty of the Levant States, while guaranteeing their alliance with France and safeguarding the rights and interests of France; in assuring the defence of the territories against the enemy and co-operating with the Allies in the military operations in the East.
>
> 'Until the régime resulting from the treaties to be concluded is established—and this ought to take place as soon as possible—you should assume all the powers hitherto exercised by the High Commissioner of France in the Levant and all the responsibilities incumbent upon him.
>
> 'Furthermore, your powers will include that of representing France so far as treaties are concerned, and you will be at the same time Commander-in-Chief of our forces.
>
> 'You will bring about, whenever it shall be possible, the establishment of assemblies fully representative of the whole of the population and the formation of Governments having the confidence of those assemblies. You will immediately enter into negotiations with these Governments, so as to bring about the conclusion of treaties of alliance. These treaties will be signed by those Governments and by me.
>
> 'In spite of the confusion and chaos resulting from the temporary reverses of the French armies and in spite of the intrigues of the invader in our country, the Mandate of

France, which was confirmed by the League of Nations in 1923, should be exercised up to the moment when it is effectively ended, and until then the work of France ought to continue.

'In consequence, you will take as the point of departure for the negotiations with the Levant States the treaties of alliance concluded with them in 1936. You will suggest to the Governments of the Levant States the temporary measures which should be taken in common in order to meet the needs of our common defence in this war, and which therefore will form the subject of special conventions.

'I take it upon myself to bring to the knowledge of the League of Nations, at the appropriate time, the replacement of the mandatory régime in the Levant by a new régime which will pursue the aims for which the Mandate was established.'[1]

9

Although since the armistice the Free French have been in territorial control of Syria and Lebanon and responsible for the civil administration, the country has been mainly garrisoned by British and Imperial troops of the Ninth Army, and supreme military authority has been in British hands. Economically and financially it has become part of the bloc of British-controlled Middle Eastern territories. In September, 1941, for example, it was admitted to the sterling area. Thus Free French policy in the Mandated Territories has affected not only Franco-Arab but also Franco-British relations.

The attitude of the British Government towards the future political régime in Syria and Lebanon was made clear from the beginning of the Free French administration. First, it desired to see these States given their independence; but secondly, subject to the fulfilment of that condition, it acknowledged the priority of France's position over that of any other European Power in Syria and Lebanon. This attitude was defined in an interchange of letters between Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, the Minister of State in the Middle East, and General de Gaulle on August 15th, 1941. Mr. Lyttelton wrote:

'At the conclusion of our talk to-day I am happy to repeat to you the assurance that Great Britain has no interest in Syria or the Lebanon, except to win the war. We have no desire to encroach in any way upon the position of France. Both Free France and Great Britain are pledged to the independence of Syria and the Lebanon. When this essential step has been taken, and without prejudice to it, we freely admit that France should have the predominant position in Syria and the Lebanon over any other European Power. It is in this spirit that we have always acted. You will have seen recent utterances of the Prime Minister in this sense. I am glad to reaffirm them now to our friends and allies, who have our full sympathy and support.

---

[1] For the French text, see Appendix A12.

'On our side, I am happy again to receive your assurances of the determination of Free France, as friend and ally of Great Britain and in accordance with the agreements and declarations which you have already made, to pursue relentlessly to the finish the war against the common enemy. I am happy that we should thus reaffirm our complete understanding and agreement.'

General de Gaulle replied :

'I have received the letter which you have been kind enough to send me following our interview of to-day. I am happy to note your renewed assurances regarding the disinterestedness of Great Britain in Syria and Lebanon, and the fact that Great Britain admits as a basic principle the pre-eminent and privileged position of France when these shall have attained independence in conformity with the undertaking which Free France has taken with regard to them.

'I take this opportunity of repeating that Free France, that is to say, France, is resolved to pursue the war at the side of Great Britain, her friend and ally, until the attainment of complete victory against our common enemies.'[1]

The British guarantees were repeated with even greater authority by the Prime Minister. Speaking in the House of Commons on September 9th, 1941, he said :

'We have no ambitions in Syria. We do not seek to replace or supplant France, or substitute British for French interests in any part of Syria. We are only in Syria in order to win the war. However, I must make it quite clear that our policy, to which our Free French Allies

---

[1] *Bulletin of International News*, XVIII, No. 17, p. 1,115.

648

have subscribed, is that Syria shall be handed back to the Syrians, who will assume at the earliest possible moment their independent sovereign rights. We do not propose that this process of creating an independent Syrian Government or Governments—because it may be that they will not be one Government—shall wait until the end of the war. We contemplate constantly increasing the Syrian share in the administration. There is no question of France maintaining the same position which she exercised in Syria before the war, but which the French Government had realized must come to an end. On the other hand, we recognize that among all the nations of Europe the position of France in Syria is one of special privilege, and that in so far as any European countries have influence in Syria, that of France will be pre-eminent.' (Hón. Members: 'Why?') 'Because that is the policy which we have decided to adopt. We did not go there in order to deprive France of her historic position in Syria, except in so far as is necessary to fulfil our obligations and pledges to the Syrian population. There must be no question, even in war-time, of a mere substitution of Free French interests for Vichy French interests. The Syrian peoples are to come back into their own. This is fully recognized in the documents which have been exchanged between the Minister of State and the representatives of the Free French.

'I was asked a question about our relations with Iraq. They are special; our relations with Egypt are special, and, in the same way, I conceive that Fránce will have special arrangements with Syria. The independence of Syria is a prime feature in our policy."[1]

10

There followed a period of negotiations and discussions, during which the Government of Khalid al-Azm in Syria and that of Alfred Naccache in Lebanon remained in office. General Catroux, in the letter in which he asked the Syrian Prime Minister to remain in office, stated that the Mandatory régime could not be terminated until the occupation of the country was complete; after that a régime of independence would be inaugurated, to be guaranteed by a treaty negotiated on a footing of equality.

---

[1] *Parliamentary Debates*, 5th series, Vol. 374, col. 76.

The decision on the form of political organization to be 618 adopted was reached sooner in Syria than in Lebanon. In 645 September, 1941, there was published a letter from General Catroux to Shaikh Taj ad-Din al-Ḥasani. In this letter the General stated that, after having diligently consulted public opinion and having no object in view but the good of the country, he considered Shaikh Taj ad-Din to be better qualified than any one else to organize the new independent and sovereign Syrian State., 'I propose therefore to Your Excellency that you take in hand the destinies of Syria with the title, the prerogatives and the privileges attached to the office of President of the Syrian Republic, and as such set up the government of the State with the shortest possible delay. If, as I hope, you accept this offer, you can be certain of my entire support and full collaboration.'[1]

The new President was the son of a Moslem divine of Damascus, Shaikh Badr ad-Din. He himself had been prominent in Syrian politics in the years between the two wars, as an advocate of collaboration with the Mandatory Power who had at the same time always regarded himself as a nationalist. He had twice been Prime Minister: from 1928 to 1931 and again from 1934 to 1935. Since 1935 he had taken no active part in Syrian political life and his reputation for wisdom and probity was by no means high.

A few days later, on September 28th, 1941, General 648 Catroux proclaimed the independence of Syria:

> 'Syrians,
>
> 'On June 8th last, at the time of the entry into the Levant of the Allied Armies, in a manifesto which I addressed to you in the name of Free France and of her Chief, General de Gaulle, I recognized Syria as a sovereign and independent State, under the promise of a treaty guaranteeing our reciprocal relations.
>
> 'The British Government, the Ally of Free France, acting in accord with her, associated itself by a simultaneous declaration with this important political act. On the 16th of this month, I put my declaration of June 8th into effect by translating into established fact the principle there enunciated.
>
> 'Thus the era is begun in which independent and sovereign Syria will herself control her destinies.

---

[1] *La Bourse Egyptienne* (Cairo), September 17th, 1941.

641 'His Excellency Shaikh Taj ad-Din al-Hasani has consented to organize the new régime of independence. His experience of affairs and his profound understanding of the country's needs mark him out for this high mission. I assure him as well as the whole Syrian nation of my support and of my loyal collaboration.

'In this collaboration I shall be guided by the following principles :

'The Syrian State will enjoy from now onwards the rights and prerogatives of an independent and sovereign State. These will be subject only to the restrictions imposed by the present state of war and the security of the territory.

'Her position as *de facto* Ally of Free France and of Great Britain necessitates a strict conformity of her policy with that of the Allies.

'With her accession to independent international life, Syria assumes naturally the rights and obligations hitherto undertaken in her name.

'She has the power to appoint diplomatic representatives in countries where she judges that her interests demand such representation. Everywhere else, the authorities of Free France will lend her their good offices in order to ensure the defence of her general rights and interests as well as the protection of her nationals.

'The Syrian State is empowered to organize its national military forces. Free France will lend it all help to this end.

'Great Britain having already committed herself on several occasions to the recognition of the independence of Syria, Free France will intervene without delay with other allied or friendly Powers, so that they also should recognize the independence of the Syrian State.

'Free France considers that the State of Syria forms politically and territorially an indivisible unity, of which the integrity ought to be preserved against any dismemberment. In consequence she will look with favour upon the strengthening of the political, cultural and economic links which unite the different portions of Syria. To this end, the Delegate-General and Plenipotentiary of Free France will revise the texts defining the particular status formerly accorded to certain regions, in such a way that, while the administrative and financial autonomy to which they show themselves firmly attached is preserved, they shall be

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MDI Syria MDI

politically subordinated to the Syrian central power. Thus the principle of Syrian unity and the particular aspirations of these regions will be reconciled.

'It remains understood, moreover, that the guarantees of public right set out in the organic statutes in favour of individuals and of communities will be maintained and given full effect.

'Free France undertakes to act as intermediary between Syria and Lebanon for the purpose of seeking and establishing the basis of economic collaboration between the two countries, and of removing the difficulties which this collaboration encounters at present.

'This "entente", necessary between two countries which are both brothers and neighbours, must guarantee the respective rights of the two parties, and establish their relations on the basis of reciprocal confidence.

'To safeguard the independence and sovereignty of Syria and bring the common struggle to a successful issue, the Allies will undertake the defence of the country during the period of war. To this end, the Syrian Government will put the Syrian national forces at the disposal of the Allied Command, in order to co-operate in the defence of the territory. Further, the Allied Command will make use from now onwards, as far as military necessities demand, of the resources and public services of Syria, particularly of means of communication, aerodromes and coastal establishments. The defence of the territory demands also that a strict collaboration should exist at all times between the Commander-in-Chief and Delegate-General, and the gendarmerie, police and security services of the Syrian State. Syria must indeed be defended in time of war not only against her enemies without but also against those within.

'By reason of the inclusion of Syria in the war-zone and in the economic and financial system of the Allies, the strictest collaboration between the Syrian Government and the Allies is also necessary in order to ensure, for the duration of hostilities and in the common interest, the observance of all measures taken to conduct the economic war satisfactorily.

'To this end, for the duration of the war the widest facilities will be accorded to assure the greatest possible freedom of exchange between Syria and the countries of the

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1 LEBANON ME

5 648 sterling bloc. Syria, having now entered the sterling bloc, will in the economic and financial sphere and especially in that of exchange take the necessary measures to follow the general policy of the sterling bloc.

'The preceding stipulations reconcile respect for Syrian independence and sovereignty with the necessities of war. They are inspired by a single thought, that of winning the war and by this means assuring to Syria the future of a free people. They give the Franco-Syrian problem a solution which springs from the desire of Free France not to retard, in spite of the war, the accomplishment of Syrian national aspirations and the fulfilment of the undertakings of the Allies. But it is necessary that a final settlement should be substituted for them as soon as possible, in the form of a Franco-Syrian Treaty which will definitively guarantee the independence of the country.

'Long live independent Syria! Long live England! Long live France!'[1]

S 645 648 At the same time the new President of the Syrian Republic took up his duties. In October Shaikh Taj was able to announce the formation of a Government, at the head of which was Hasan al-Hakim, a well-known financial expert and a former collaborator of Dr. Shahbandar. Among the members of the Ministry were an Alawi and a Druze, but none of the leaders of the Bloc.

The declaration of independence and the formation of a Government aroused no enthusiasm among the population. The nationalists preferred to wait before giving their approval, to see what steps Free France would take to render her undertakings effective. They also objected to the appointment of the President instead of his choice by a freely elected Chamber; and in particular they disapproved of the appointment of Shaikh Taj.

II

L 648 The independence of Lebanon was proclaimed two months later, on November 26th, 1941. General Catroux's proclamation ran as follows:

'Lebanese,

'The proclamation which I addressed to you on June 8th in the name of General de Gaulle, Chief of Free France, and

---

[1] For the French text, see Appendix A14.

L 648 There flow from this a certain number of rights and obligations, among them in particular those stipulated below.'

The remainder of the proclamation was substantially the same, with minor and verbal variations, as the proclamation of Syrian independence.[1]

This declaration was received lukewarmly by the greater part of the population. It was open to objection on various grounds. Those who advocated the union of Lebanon with Syria regarded the proclamation as a repudiation of the promise contained in Catroux's statement of June 8th, that the Syrians and Lebanese would be free to form themselves into separate States or to unite into a single State. They objected also to the assertion that Lebanon was politically and territorially an indivisible unit. A similar statement had appeared in the Syrian proclamation and had there been open to no objection; but in the Lebanese proclamation it was taken to imply that any modification of the frontiers between Syria and Lebanon was out of the question.

Furthermore, all those who were opposed to the maintenance of French control, whether they were believers in Lebanese, in Syrian or in Arab nationalism, resented the references to France's 'mission' in the Levant and the statement that the future treaty would be negotiated on the basis of the Treaty of 1936.

L 645 These criticisms were not lessened when it was announced that a Ministry had been formed, with Ahmad ad-Da'uq as Prime Minister, and composed of colourless personalities without any claim to represent the population.

12

S 648 The British Government approved of the Free French policy of proclaiming Syrian and Lebanese independence, and gave its formal recognition to both the newly independent States, in the shape of letters of congratulation sent by His Majesty King George VI, to the Syrian President on October 27th, 1941, and to the Lebanese on December 26th.

In February, 1942, Major-General Sir Edward Spears, who had been connected with the Free French movement since its beginning, and had been in the Levant as head of the 'Spears Mission' since 1941, was appointed first British Minister to the Syrian and Lebanese Republics.

---

[1] For the French text, see Appendix A15.

In addition to Great Britain, the independence of Syria 648 and Lebanon was recognized by a number of the Allied Governments in exile. That of Syria, but not of Lebanon, was recognized by Sa'udi Arabia; while Egypt recognized the independence of the Syrian State but not its present form of government. The other Arab Governments, however, withheld their recognition, preferring to make no move until the form of independence should acquire reality through the re-establishment of constitutional government. Turkey, too, gave no recognition, not having official relations with the Free French. Most important of all, the United States Government maintained a reserved attitude. Mr. Cordell Hull, in a statement issued on November 29th, 1941, stressed the sympathy which the American Government and people had always felt for the 'natural and legitimate aspirations of the peoples of Syria and Lebanon'. The convention of 1924, in which the U.S. Government gave its consent to the Mandate, clearly embodied the principle of Syrian and Lebanese independence. It must be regarded as continuing in effect until new instruments of a mutually satisfactory nature could be negotiated and ratified. The U.S. Government was hopeful that as soon as international conditions permitted such negotiations would take place, enabling the Government to extend formal recognition to Syria and Lebanon.[1] In October, 1942, Mr. George Wadsworth was appointed U.S. Consul-General and Diplomatic Agent to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments.

13

In spite of the declarations of independence, the French 648 authorities showed no eagerness either to restore constitutional 642 life or to transfer powers to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments. In August, 1942, indeed, General de Gaulle stated categorically in a speech made during his visit to the Levant that elections could not yet be held. The only progress made was the issue in February, 1942, of decrees once more incorporating Jebel Druze and the Alawi district in the Syrian State, while at the same time endowing them with special administrative and financial régimes similar to those which had existed from 1936 to 1939.[2] Apart from this, the only political events of the years were changes of Ministries. In 000

---

[1] For text, see P. W. Ireland (ed.), *The Near East, Problems and Prospects* (Chicago, 1942), p. 296.

[2] See Chapter XI.

000 645 Lebanon the Government of Sami as-Sulh succeeded that of Ahmad ad-Da'uq. In Syria, Hasan al-Hakim resigned in April, 1942, and was succeeded by Husni al-Barazi, who himself gave way in January, 1943, to Jamil al-Ulshi. These changes had only a very limited significance.

648 186 This failure to restore the constitutional Government increased the discontent which had already been caused in both Syria and Lebanon by the way in which their independence had been proclaimed. The administrative methods of the Free French officials were also much criticized; more particularly, a general contempt was felt for the many officials who had served Vichy and had only gone over to Free France after the occupation of the country in 1941. Thus the belief grew up that Syria and Lebanon had gained nothing by their change of masters. It was a belief held not only by the political classes but by ordinary citizens who resented the inefficiency of the French administration; not only by Arab nationalists but even by many of the Lebanese Christians, who could not feel towards the Free French the admiration, gratitude and trust which they had had for France as a great Power. In the circumstances it was natural that Great Britain should be largely blamed for the actions of her ally.

645 665 One consequence of the discontent was a revival in the power of the National Bloc. The dissensions between its leaders were patched up, and the Bloc united in its demand for the restoration of the Chamber of 1936-1939 or else the holding of fresh elections. Its spokesman was Shukri al-Quwatli, whose reputation had grown steadily throughout the years. In October, 1941, shortly after the Allied occupation, he absented himself from Syria on a visit to Arabia and Iraq; but after his return to Damascus in September, 1942, he became once more the dominant figure of the political scene. Side by side with the revival of the Bloc there went a growth in the size and influence of the Socialist and Communist movements; this was due not so much to the spread of Marxist doctrines as to the universal discontent with the existing order and the eagerness to snatch at any hope of change.

14

722 In Syria and Lebanon alike, the attention of the greater part of the population was concentrated upon the economic problems of the war. Two of them were peculiarly important.

1.2 been for the large programme of public works undertaken by the Ninth Army; they include the construction of a railway line between Haifa and Tripoli, the building of roads and the execution of schemes of irrigation.

15

648 After long hesitation, the Free French at last decided to
642 restore constitutional government. This step was made easier in Syria by the death of Shaikh Taj in January, 1943. A few days later M. Helleu, who was deputizing for General Catroux, absent in North Africa, announced that the General would authorize the re-establishment of the Constitution on his return to the Levant. In March, 1943, provisional Governments were established in both Syria and Lebanon in order to make the necessary arrangements for the elections; that in Syria was headed by Ata al-Ayyubi, that in Lebanon by Dr. Ayyub Tabit.

666 In Syria the arrangements were soon completed. It was
646 decided that the Chamber should consist of 124 deputies,
665 including a number of representatives of the minorities; and that the elections for it should be held in two stages. The primary elections were held on July 10th-11th, the secondary on July 26th. They resulted in an overwhelming majority for the National Bloc. The victory of the Bloc was more complete in Damascus than in Aleppo, where there was a split in the nationalist ranks.

643 On August 17th, 1943, the new Chamber met and elected
645 Shukri al-Quwatli President of the Republic and Faris al-Khuri President of the Chamber. A few days later a new Ministry took office, drawn almost wholly from the Bloc. It was constituted as follows:

Prime Minister	Saadullah al-Jabiri.
Minister for Foreign Affairs	Jamil Mardam Bey.
Minister of the Interior ..	Lutfi al-Haffar.
Minister of Finance ..	Khalid al-Azm.
Minister of Defence and Public Instruction ..	Nasuhi al-Bukhari.
Minister of Public Works and Supplies	Mazhar Raslan.
Minister of Justice ..	Abdur-Rahman al-Kayyali.
Minister of Agriculture and Commerce ..	Tawfiq Shamiyyah.

L 645 The members of the Ministry were respectively Sunni Moslem, Greek Orthodox, Maronite, Greek Catholic, Druze and Shi'i. Thus the convention which had grown up that the Cabinet should include representatives of all the more important sects was respected. The Ministers, however divided though they might be in religious allegiance, were united in desiring on the one hand a greater measure of self-government for Lebanon, and on the other closer relations between Lebanon and Syria.

17

S 648 L 648 Iraq recognized the independence of Syria in August and of Lebanon in October. In September the Egyptian Government announced its decision to recognize Lebanese independence and to establish legations in Damascus and Beirut. The Sa'udi Arabian Government also declared its intention to set up a legation in Damascus. These three Governments showed in this and in other ways their satisfaction with the restoration of constitutional rule in the Levant States.

These steps made possible a serious attempt by the Syrians and Lebanese to define their relations with each other, with France, with the other Arab countries and with the United Nations.[1]

---

[1] More recent events are summarized in the Postscript.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
LEBANON ME1

POSTSCRIPT: THE EVENTS OF OCTOBER, 1943, TO APRIL, 1945

I

S 648
L 648

CHAPTER XII carried the political history of Syria and Lebanon down to the restoration of constitutional forms and the assumption of office by national Governments (in Damascus in August, 1943, and in Beirut in September).[1] From the first it was clear that the nationalists did not regard their accession to power as the end of the national struggle. Syria and Lebanon had been formally recognized as independent in 1941, and the restoration of the constitutions could be regarded as the first step towards making self-government a reality; but there were still other steps to be taken. Some of them could not, it is true, be taken before the end of the war. In his proclamations of independence, General Catroux had explicitly stated that the needs of war required Syria and Lebanon to conduct their policy in accordance with that of the Allies. The Allies must assume responsibility for the defence of the country and its war production, and the Syrian and Lebanese Governments should place their armed forces at the Allies' disposal for those purposes, as well as aerodromes, harbours and communications; and the closest collaboration should exist between the Allied Commander-in-Chief and the Free French Delegate-General on the one hand and the Syrian and Lebanese police and gendarmerie on the other. The Syrian and Lebanese Governments should also collaborate with the Allies in matters concerning the economic war, and should follow the general policy of the sterling bloc in the economic and financial spheres.[2]

Such restrictions were recognized to be necessary by the Syrian and Lebanese Governments, which looked on them as a contribution they could make to the Allied war-effort. There were, however, other limitations upon their freedom of action.

First, there were limitations upon the legislative power of the two Governments, imposed on the one hand by the power of the Delegate-General to legislate by summary decree, and on the other by certain general reservations contained in the Syrian and Lebanese Constitutions. Thus Article 116 of the Syrian Constitution stated:—

'Aucune disposition de la présente Constitution n'est et

---

[1] See pp. 256, 257.

[2] See pp. 247, 250.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MDI Syria MDI LEBANON MB

S 648 L 648 ne peut être en opposition avec les obligations contractées par la France en ce qui concerne la Syrie, particulièrement envers la Société des Nations. Cette réserve s'applique spécialement aux articles qui touchent au maintien de l'ordre, de la sécurité et de la défense du pays, et à ceux qui intéressent les relations extérieures. Pendant la durée des obligations internationales de la France, en ce qui concerne la Syrie, les dispositions de la présente Constitution qui seraient de nature à les affecter ne seront pas applicables que dans les conditions déterminées par accord à intervener entre les gouvernements français et syrien. En conséquence, les lois prévues par les articles de la présente Constitution dont l'application pourrait intéresser ses responsabilités ne seront discutées et promulguées conformément à la présente Constitution qu'en exécution de cet accord. Les décisions d'ordre législatif et réglementaire prises par les représentants du gouvernement français ne pourront être modifiées qu'après entente entre les deux gouvernements.'

Secondly, there were a number of important administrative services which were wholly removed from the control of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments and placed under direct supervision of the Delegate-General, who administered them through a staff which was largely French in the upper ranks, but Syrian and Lebanese in the lower. They included :

S L 652 648 i. The 'Common Interests', a number of departments dealing with matters of concern to both Syria and Lebanon. The most important of them were the customs administration, the control of concessionary companies and certain economic, financial and social services. They were financed out of the 'Funds of Common Interest', consisting almost entirely of customs receipts, which were sufficient not only to pay for these services but to provide a large surplus which was in principle divided between the two Governments.

S L 648 701 ii. The 'Troupes Spéciales', the local Syrian and Lebanese levies. Some thousands strong, they had been in existence throughout the Mandatory period as an integral part of the French Army of the Levant, and until the outbreak of war they had been wholly paid for out of the 'Funds of Common Interest'. They now formed part of the French territorial command.

000 iii. The 'Sûreté Générale', the organization responsible for

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MP/ Lebanon MEI

iii. The 'Sûreté Générale' the organization responsible for internal security. It had always been in French hands, although in principle the local police and gendarmerie were under the control of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments.

S L 648 625

iv. The control of the Beduin.

v. The censorship of the press, which was in French hands, although there was also a British military censor. (Shortly after the accession of the new Syrian and Lebanese Governments to power, they set up their own political censorships, which did not, however, replace that of the French, but were additional to it.)

S L 648 204

Thirdly, in addition to these legislative and administrative limitations, there were various restrictions even on those powers which the Governments possessed:

S L 648

i. Their freedom of action was restricted by the great influence of the administrative and technical 'conseillers', who, although officials of the Governments and in theory subordinate to the Ministers whom they advised, were in practice almost all-powerful in the departments to which they were attached.

ii. Another restriction arose from the existence of the officers of the 'Services Spéciaux' who were scattered throughout the country. In theory they were the Delegate-General's intelligence officers, but in practice they had always exercised a virtually unlimited authority in their regions: an authority which they had enforced where necessary by means of the 'Gardes Mobiles', a semi-military police force which they had at their disposal. Among other things, the control of the frontiers was in their hands.

The nationalists had always demanded the recognition of the two Parliaments as the sole sources of legislation; the transfer of the Common Interests and other similar services to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments; the abolition of the 'Services Spéciaux' officers and a curtailment in the powers of the 'conseillers'. It was clear that these demands would be pressed with vigour by the new Nationalist Governments, partly because of the principles involved but also because of concrete advantages to be gained from them. For example, control of the customs would give them power to regulate fiscal policy and thus indirectly to assist industry and trade, and would place in their hands an important source of

S L 648 186

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
LEBANON MD1

S 648 186
L 648 186

revenue. Control of concessionary companies would give them authority over the railway administration, the ports, the water and electricity companies and the tobacco monopoly, all of them in the hands of French companies and between them covering an important section of the country's economic life. The transfer of the 'Troupes Spéciales' would make possible the creation of Syrian and Lebanese Armies.

2

S 648
L 648

Faced with these demands the Comité Français de la Libération Nationale (C.F.L.N.) defined its attitude sharply. In the first place, it claimed that it had inherited the Mandate from the French Republic; the Mandate conferred upon France certain obligations which neither she nor the Syrians and Lebanese were entitled to repudiate; they could only be ended or modified by the League of Nations or whatever organization might replace it. No definitive change of a radical kind could therefore be made until the League were revived or a successor to it established.

Secondly, the Committee, while admitting the possibility of a transfer of powers, sought to make it conditional on the willingness of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments to conclude with them Treaties guaranteeing on the one hand the independence of the two States and on the other the special position and interests of France. The declarations of independence had foreshadowed the conclusion of such Treaties: and it was therefore claimed that the grant of independence had been conditional upon it.

Subsequently, under the pressure of events, the Committee admitted the right of the two Governments to demand immediate legislative and administrative concessions, but emphasized that the transfer of powers should take place in a correct way. In view of the importance of the issues involved, it should only take place after negotiation and agreement with the representatives of France. Any attempt to modify the present situation by unilateral action, without such formal agreement, could only be regarded as a deliberate insult to France.

To each of these theses the Syrians and Lebanese had an answer. To the first, they replied that they had never recognized the Mandate, which had been imposed upon them against their will and without their consent being asked.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MB1
LEBANON MB1

Furthermore, they did not recognize the Algiers Committee as the legitimate inheritor of the Mandatory obligations of France. Even granting, however, that Free France had inherited the Mandate, General Catroux had proclaimed the independence of the two States, not as something to be granted in the future, but as something to take effect from the moment of his proclamation. It might be that technically Free France had had no authority to end the Mandate, but in practice the Mandate had ceased to exist on the day of his declaration; and unless Free France wished to go back upon the declaration and the proclamations of independence, she was bound henceforth to treat the Mandate as virtually a dead letter.

S 248
L 648

To the second argument, that the C.F.L.N. could only make the desired concessions in return for the conclusion of treaties, they replied that the declarations of independence, while envisaging the possibility of such treaties, had in no way made the grant of independence conditional upon their being negotiated. Independence had been given unconditionally (except for the limitations made necessary by the state of war); and if Syria and Lebanon were really independent, they had a right to decide for themselves whether or not to make treaties with a foreign State, and could not be forced into it by the threat that powers which were already theirs by right would otherwise be withheld. Furthermore, they had no intention of signing Treaties if at all, until after the war, since they had no reason to believe that France would then necessarily honour treaties concluded in her name by the C.F.L.N.

As for the third argument, that the concessions demanded could only be made by means of agreements, they, too, preferred that the questions at issue should be settled if possible through agreement with the C.F.L.N. But if the Committee were unwilling, as it at first seemed to be, they could not give up their right to take matters into their own hands. What did the independence of a State mean, if it could not unilaterally alter its constitution and establish its own administrative services?

Beneath these arguments and replies there lay an intense mutual distrust and suspicion, which were the real cause of the crisis. The nationalists of Syria and Lebanon had no confidence in the willingness of France ever to grant them genuine self-government. They were afraid that unless they

S
648
L
648

exerted pressure nothing would be done; and that after the war, if France's strength revived, she would attempt to re-establish her position by force. It was therefore vital for them, while it was possible, to put themselves in a position in which the opposition of France to their aspirations could no longer harm them. It was particularly important to obtain possession of those administrative services which had always been used as instruments of French policy, and might still be used to obstruct the new Nationalist governments during the war and subsequently to overthrow them: the Sûreté Générale and the Services Spéciaux, the Funds of Common Interest, the Troupes Spéciales.

The French on their side regarded the claims of the Syrians and Lebanese as part of a movement which was primarily and deliberately anti-French, and of which the purpose was to take advantage of France's weakness in order to destroy French influence in the Levant. They would have preferred to make no concessions to Arab nationalism at all; but since they were bound to do so in virtue of promises already made, they would only do so in return for a guarantee of their position and interests. To give up the Common Interests and other services, the one bargaining counter they had, without obtaining such a guarantee would be a severe blow to French national prestige and to the movement of revival which since 1941 had placed a symbolic value upon Syria and Lebanon.

3

The neighbouring Arab States were deeply concerned in the struggle of Syria and Lebanon for self-government. They had always been interested in it because of ties of language and sentiment; but in 1943 the matter became even more important because of the current discussions on Arab unity. Reference has already been made to these discussions in Chapters XII and XIII. It has been mentioned that after the re-establishment of constitutional forms in Syria, Nahhas Pasha invited the Syrian Government to send representatives to discuss the Arab question with him. The Syrian delegation visited Cairo in October and held conversations on Arab unity with the Egyptian Premier; its visit aroused much public attention in Egypt, and it was generally expected that a Lebanese delegation would soon follow it to Cairo. Thus the Levant States were drawn into the movement for unity; for

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MDI
LEBANON ME1

political, strategic and economic reasons it was impossible to S 648 conceive of an Arab union in which they were not included; L 648 but it was clear that they could not take an effective part in that movement until they possessed self-government and effective freedom of political action. It was therefore a general Arab interest to see Syria and Lebanon possessed of self-government. More than that, if a crisis should arise over the grant of self-government, it would be vital for the other Arab countries to give what help they could to the Syrians and Lebanese, because such a crisis would be a test of the effective strength of Arab unity. In regard to Lebanon there was a special reason for going to her help: Lebanon was only half-heartedly Arab nationalist, and nothing would strengthen her Arab sentiment so much as a practical demonstration of the concern of the other Arab countries for her welfare and of the benefits she could obtain from their assistance.

4

It was in fact the Lebanese Government which first challenged the French on the issue of the transfer of powers. L 648 642 The new Prime Minister, Riyadh as-Sulh, made a statement of policy to the Chamber on October 7th, 1943, announcing the Government's intention to propose a revision of the Constitution. This, he said, would be purged of all provisions inconsistent with the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon, so that henceforward no authorities other than the legitimate representatives of the nation would participate in its government. During the following weeks the Government, while preparing its constitutional measure, was also engaged in controversy with the French authorities as to its right to modify the Constitution without previous agreement with the Mandatory Power. The controversy was made public by C.F.L.N. in a communiqué dated November 5th. This stated that the Committee could not recognize the validity of a unilateral revision of the Constitution; but that this decision did not affect the determination of France 'to accord Lebanon complete independence by means of negotiations conducted between the two parties in the spirit of loyal and friendly collaboration which must continue as in the past to inspire the special relations uniting Lebanon and France'. The Lebanese Government proceeded with the arrangements they

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
LEBANON MD1

L 648 669 of November 11th with the exception of that which declared the constitutional amendments null and void.

5

S 648 L 648 The acute crisis was now over, but the problem from which it had sprung was still unsolved. When the Lebanese Chamber re-assembled, the Premier asserted his Government's view that the reforms of November 8th were still in force. Moreover, the Syrian authorities lost no time, once the tension in Lebanon was relaxed, in taking parallel action. At an extraordinary session of the Syrian Chamber on January 24th, 1944, the President of the Republic and the Deputies took an oath of allegiance to a new Constitution which comprised Articles 1-115 of the existing text. The effect of this was to annul Article 116. Earlier, on December 1st, the Syrian Premier had declared that Syria did not recognize the Mandate, and was not willing to conclude a Treaty as a condition of the transfer of powers which properly belonged to her; had demanded the surrender by the French of all the attributes of sovereignty, under those limitations only which were necessitated by the state of war; and had affirmed that the Syrian and Lebanese Governments were in agreement on the administration of the common interests.

The C.F.L.N. left these claims and assertions unchallenged, and announced that General Catroux would again go to Beirut, this time for the purpose of negotiating with the two Governments on the transfer of powers. The negotiations resulted in an agreement, concluded on December 22nd, which provided that the powers previously exercised by French authorities in the name of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments should be transferred to their control. They would take over the services included in the category of Common Interests as from January 1st, and other powers by specific agreements still to be concluded. Thus, by the beginning of 1944, the two States had survived a sharp test of their will to independence and had extended the range of their autonomous administration.

6

S L 645 In the course of the year 1944 there were a number of changes in the political situation in Syria and Lebanon. Some of these changes were of no more than local importance.

L 648 S 648 In regard to the 'Services Economiques' and certain other departments, the experiment was tried of administering them by joint Syro-Lebanese commissions; but for the most part the transferred services were administered separately by the two Governments. To the more ardent nationalists, this was an unsatisfactory element in a transfer which was otherwise to be welcomed. They complained also that the transfer was more in name than in reality, since for reasons of efficiency the French personnel of the services was retained temporarily.

S (ii) 648 436 L 648 436 In February, 1944, an Anglo-French financial agreement was signed. It named a 'franc area' composed of all territories under the control of the French Committee of National Liberation, and fixed the rate of exchange at 200 francs to the pound sterling. With the agreement of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments, a special area fixed the rate of exchange of the Syro-Lebanese pound at 22.65 francs (it had previously been 20 francs), and thus prevented any change in the present rate of 8.83 Syro-Lebanese pounds to the pound sterling. The French Committee also agreed to revalue certain franc assets of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments, to restore the gold formerly held by the Banque de Syrie et du Liban, and, should there be any further modification in the value of the franc, to guarantee the Syro-Lebanese pound against any resulting loss.

The agreement was widely criticized in Syria and Lebanon. It was regarded as contravening the allied declarations of June, 1941, which promised Syria and Lebanon full membership of the sterling bloc. Moreover, by weakening the link between the pound sterling and the currency of the two States, it created barriers between them and the other Arab States at a time when the movement for closer association between the Arab countries was gathering renewed strength. More important still, it was observed that the agreement was only temporary, and could be terminated by either party at three months' notice. When it should come to an end, there was a danger

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MO1
LEBANON ME1

S
L
648

that the Syro-Lebanese currency would once more share in the precarious fortunes of the franc; and its reserves would be under the control of the French Government, which might be tempted to use this control in order to strike a hard political or financial bargain.

7

S
648
701
L
648
701

It has already been mentioned that by the end of 1944 all important services administered by the Delegation-General had been transferred to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments, with the exception of the 'Troupes Spéciales'. These troops, whose numbers had been considerably augmented since the allied occupation in 1941, and who now formed a reasonably well-disciplined and well-armed force of several thousands, were under the French territorial command. Throughout the year the two Governments pressed for their formal transfer, while making it clear that for the duration of the war they would, of course, remain at the disposal of the Allied Command. The French Government was unwilling to transfer them until the end of the war, or at least until a later stage in it, and was not prepared to give them up unconditionally but only in exchange for the conclusion of treaties of alliance with France by the Syrian and Lebanese Governments; the possession of the 'Troupes' was, in fact, their only direct bargaining-counter in their attempt to persuade the two Governments to sign such treaties.

The Syrian and Lebanese Governments for their part did not admit that the question of the 'Troupes' had anything to do with the question of the treaties. In their eyes the transfer of the 'Troupes' was a logical consequence of promises and declarations already made by the French: General Catroux, in his declarations of Syrian and Lebanese independence in 1941, had stated that the two States were at liberty to raise national armies. Moreover, the transfer of the 'Troupes Spéciales' was a necessary preliminary to any negotiations for a treaty; such negotiations could only take place on a footing of complete equality, and equality could not exist so long as the Syrian and Lebanese Governments did not possess armed forces and so long as the French held over their heads the threat of refusal to transfer the 'Troupes'.

In addition to insisting on their right to control the

11: Hourani 8-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MDI
LEBANON MEI

S
648
701
L
648
701

'Troupes,' the two Governments emphasized their need for them. The experience of 1936-1939 had shown what a mockery was self-government so long as the Government had not sufficient forces at its disposal to assert its will. No Government could expect obedience and respect so long as it was not able to curb the pretensions of the overmighty subject; this was particularly true of a country like Syria, where semi-feudal tenures were still to be found, localism was so strong a force, and there existed large Beduin tribes traditionally recalcitrant to civil government and having had full opportunity to arm themselves during the war. Local disorders had already taken place among the Beduin in the Jazirah and in the area dominated by Sulaiman Murshid. It was impossible to rely entirely upon French-controlled forces to prevent disorder, since that would be to admit that France was still the real power in the country and the Government only a façade; loyalty and obedience would only be given where real authority lay.

There was another reason for the attitude of the Syrian Government. They remembered that in 1920 the French had occupied Damascus and overturned the national Government by force; and that in 1925 the national revolt had been suppressed with the help of local levies drawn from the Circassian and other minorities. They were afraid that at some time in the future the French Government might be tempted to repeat its action and to restore its authority in Damascus with the help of the 'Troupes Spéciales', who included a large number of Circassians, Kurds and other minorities organized in separate units. Since the 'Troupes' were the only considerable armed force under French command in the Levant, their transfer to the local Governments would remove this weapon from the hands of the French.

For all these reasons the Syrian and Lebanese Governments demanded the immediate and unconditional transfer of the 'Troupes Spéciales', or else, if this were refused, their disbandment. Otherwise they would proceed with the formation of national armies. Both Governments made special appropriations for this purpose in their 1944 and 1945 budgets.

With this fundamental difference of opinion between the French point of view and that of the Syrians and Lebanese, it is not surprising that when discussions on the subject opened in the early months of 1944 they led to little result. A draft

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
Lebanon MD1

S
L
701
641

agreement was, it is true, reached between the Syrian Government and the Delegate-General, General Beynet, but negotiations were then broken off by the French Committee in Algiers. With Lebanon a limited agreement was reached; in June it was arranged that a battalion wholly officered by Lebanese would be placed at the disposal of the Lebanese Government pending the conclusion of a general agreement. By the end of the year no further progress had been made, and the new year opened with demonstrations in Damascus in favour of the formation of an army and against what was believed to be the too indulgent attitude of the Government towards French delays.

8

S
648
L
648

A still more fundamental question, that of the conclusion of Franco-Syrian and Franco-Lebanese Treaties, became urgent during 1944.

The French Government claimed that, in spite of the declarations of independence made in 1941 and the subsequent transfer of powers, legally the Mandate still remained in force and would remain until a restored League of Nations or another international authority should bring it to an end; as in the case of Iraq, a necessary preliminary to its being brought to an end was the conclusion of treaties of alliance and friendship with the Mandatory Power. They pointed out that the declarations of independence had referred to the negotiation of such treaties, and even claimed that independence had not been granted unconditionally but only on condition that the Syrian and Lebanese Governments entered into treaties with France. They referred further to Great Britain's recognition of France's pre-eminent and privileged position in the Levant, and maintained that treaties were necessary in order to define and safeguard her position.

France's insistence on the signature of treaties had several motives. There was first her desire to preserve her political, economic and other interests in the Levant States themselves. Again, there was the fear that a withdrawal from the Levant would lower her prestige in North Africa and encourage the demands of the nationalists there. Moreover, so long as Metropolitan France was not liberated, the Fighting French were naturally reluctant to give up a particle of their position anywhere in the world where they still retained it. The

S 646 L 648

liberation of France in the course of 1944 deprived this factor of its importance, and there were signs that those who had worked in the movement of resistance inside France were less interested in the Levant and less insistent on retaining their rights there than those who had been associated with General de Gaulle. (The liberation also worked in the other direction, however; it enormously strengthened the bargaining position of the French Government in their dealings with the Levant States and with the great Powers.)

There was another factor of great importance in determining France's attitude. For more than twenty years a natural process of events had been tending to draw Syria and Lebanon into the Anglo-Saxon sphere of influence, economically and culturally, no less than politically. In part this was an aspect of a world-process, the gradual extension of Anglo-Saxon influence everywhere; in part, however, it was due to local conditions, to the fact that Syria and Lebanon were integral parts of the Eastern Arab world in which British influence was dominant. The war had strengthened this tendency: on the one hand, France's power in the world had declined in proportion to that of the Anglo-Saxon powers, and on the other, the movement for Arab unity was drawing close the ties between Syria and Lebanon and their neighbours. It was, therefore, possible that if France withdrew from the Levant States her place would be taken by Great Britain, inevitably and without any deliberate British intention. France would thus have withdrawn, not in favour of Syrian and Lebanese independence, but in favour of another world Power. Even a Frenchman who believed in Anglo-French friendship and had no suspicion of British intentions could not regard this prospect with pleasure.

The treaties which the French Government contemplated were similar in principle to the Anglo-Iraqi agreement, but rather more onerous in some ways. It wanted a military convention giving it the right to use a number of naval, military and air bases, and to send a military mission to organize the Syrian and Lebanese armies; a diplomatic and consular convention giving France's representative in the Levant States precedence over other members of the diplomatic corps, and providing for the care of Syrian and Lebanese interests by France's representatives in those countries in which the States were not directly represented; a cultural agreement safeguarding the position of the French language and culture in education ; a financial agreement perpetuating the connexion between the Syro-Lebanese currency and the franc ; an undertaking by the two Governments to employ French advisers and technicians in preference to nationals of other States ; and adequate guarantees for the position of French schools, concessionary companies and other institutions. It is probable, however, that the more far-sighted and moderate members of the French Government did not believe they had any chance of obtaining a settlement so favourable as this, and would have been satisfied with any agreement, however tenuous, which would enable them to save their faces.

The Syrian and Lebanese Governments, for their part, were unwilling to bind themselves to France by such comprehensive treaties. They denied the French assertions that the Mandate was still in force, that it could only be extinguished after the conclusion of treaties and that the declarations of independence had been conditional on such treaties being made. Their attitude sprang partly from distrust based upon twenty years' experience of Mandatory rule, the memories of 1920 and 1925, past attempts to negotiate treaties and the cession of Alexandretta. It was due also to the belief that Syria and Lebanon had nothing to gain from such a close alliance with France. Their independence was already recognized by the world and did not need protecting. Moreover, France would not be in a position to protect them effectively, and they had not sufficient common interests with her to justify their linking their fate with hers permanently. The Anglo-Egyptian and Anglo-Iraqi Treaties were 'points of equilibrium', based upon and expressing essential common interests, not creating a new situation so much as formalizing one which already existed. But a Franco-Syrian or Franco-Lebanese treaty on the same model would not be a 'point of equilibrium', but an obstacle in the way of the natural development of the Levant States and could not therefore constitute a definitive settlement.

The Syrian and Lebanese Governments were unwilling, therefore, to sign an exclusive military convention with France ; to link their currency permanently with the franc ; to bind themselves to employ only French officials in their administrations ; to give such cultural undertakings as would limit their freedom of action to plan their educational systems as

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
LEBANON MD1

S 641 L 648 they thought fit; or in general to enter into any engagements which would place obstacles in the way of their closer association with their neighbours. Nor would they give a privileged position to any other Power. It was clear, however, that they would be willing to negotiate treaties of alliance and friendship with all the major Powers, France among them, and to take their full share in the task of guaranteeing international security, under the supervision of whatever international authority might be established. They would also be willing to recognize the position of French cultural and economic institutions functioning in the Levant States and to give guarantees for their freedom of action; for example, they would give assurances for the position of French concessionary companies and French schools, always provided that they confined themselves to their proper functions and did not use their freedom for political ends. They would also give guarantees to French officials and advisers in their service.

In the course of 1944, tentative discussions but not official negotiations took place with a view to clarifying the position of the two parties. They led, however, to no agreement between the two points of view, and at the end of 1944 the question of the treaty was no nearer settlement than it had been at the beginning.

9

S 648 186 The great mass of Syrian political opinion was behind the Government in its attitude towards the Army and the Treaty; if it differed from the Government, it differed in being more intransigent and less inclined to endure delays or make concessions. It was clear that, should a clash come, the French authorities could not fall back upon their old expedient of installing a 'moderate' ministry of puppets. The present governing group indeed was the most moderate that could be expected. It had already lost some of its popular support and had been severely criticized in the Chamber on account of its efforts to restrain the impatience of the people, and was only kept in power by the absence of any alternative and the personal ascendancy of the President.

L 648 186 In Lebanon, too, the attitude defined in the preceding section was held by the greater part of the Government and of the political public, but not so unanimously and unreservedly

11: Hourani 5-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria /MD1 Lebanon MD1

L 648/86 greater natural increase had given the Moslems a majority in Lebanon, they would be able to destroy the independence of Lebanon and incorporate it in Syria.

Between these two extremes there was a more balanced and moderate group. Although many of its members had opposed the independence and enlargement of Lebanon in the past, they were now willing to accept Lebanese independence within its present frontiers, but only on two conditions: the first that Lebanon followed a policy of real independence and was not subservient to France or any other Power, and the second that she co-operated closely with the other Arab States. This group included both Moslems and Christians. Its policy was based upon a number of considerations. Some of the Christians wanted an independent Arab Lebanon as a centre of Arab Christian civilization, others because they no longer believed in the possibility of French or other foreign protection and wanted an alternative. Some of the Moslems advocated Lebanese independence inside an Arab union as a means of gradually teaching the Christians to forget their fears of Arab nationalism. Others again, both Christians and Moslems, hoped that Lebanon might play a special part in the Arab world, as a centre of Western civilization and lay nationalism.

The possibility of a stable Lebanon depended entirely on this intermediate group. The success of this group, in its turn, depended on its discovering some basis of unity sufficient to neutralize the centrifugal force of sectarianism. The need for such unity led to an attempt to develop a specifically Lebanese Arab nationalism. It was also one of the causes, although by no means the only one, for the spread of Communism which was one of the features of the year in Lebanon, and also to a smaller extent in Syria.

None of these groups was fully organized or articulate, and the Lebanese political scene changed continuously and rapidly. One factor however remained stable: the majority of the population no longer wanted or believed in French protection, and any attempts by France to split Lebanon from Syria on the question of the treaty were bound to fail.

10

S L 648 The question of Franco-Syrian and Franco-Lebanese relations was complicated by its connexion with the question of Anglo-French relations in the Levant. Great Britain's policy in the Levant States was based upon two commitments undertaken in 1941: first, her endorsement of General Catroux's declarations of Syrian and Lebanese independence, and secondly, the Lyttelton-de Gaulle agreement, by which Great Britain recognized France's privileged and pre-eminent position over any other European power in the Levant, subject to the essential condition that Syria and Lebanon should be given independence. Behind these two undertakings there lay two interests. On the one hand, Great Britain was vitally interested in securing stable, friendly and contented régimes in Syria and Lebanon. The experience of the last decades had shown that any movement of unrest or discontent in the Levant States would have immediate repercussions in other Arab regions in which Great Britain was more directly interested. There was, moreover, a new consideration involved: as the Power which had occupied the Levant in 1941 and restored French rule there, Great Britain would be held responsible for what France did, and her intentions towards the Arab world as a whole would be largely judged by what happened in Syria and Lebanon. On the other hand, Great Britain urgently needed the friendship of France in Europe and the world; Anglo-French dissension in the Levant might react upon Anglo-French relations in the world; and such dissension was likely to arise if the French suspected that Great Britain was anxious for them to withdraw from the Levant in order to take their place. It was, therefore, of great importance for Great Britain to avoid giving any ground for this suspicion; this was the more difficult because of that natural tendency to the spread of Anglo-Saxon influence in the Levant which has already been mentioned. Syrian and Lebanese independence would in fact, and even with the severest of self-denying ordinances on the part of Great Britain, mean an extension of Anglo-Saxon influence; it was, therefore, essential for Great Britain to avoid giving the impression that she approved of this tendency and was trying to accelerate it.

It was clear from the beginning that, although it might be possible to reconcile these two interests, it would at least be difficult. From 1941 to the end of 1943, however, the need to try to reconcile them did not arise in an acute form, because the essential condition laid down in the Lyttelton-de Gaulle agreement—the establishment of Syrian and Lebanese independence—had not yet been properly fulfilled. British efforts

S were therefore directed to persuading the Free French to make
648 their declarations of independence a reality by the restoration
L of self-governing institutions. These efforts led to considerable
648 tension between Great Britain and Free France. Many Frenchmen refused to believe that British insistence on the independence of the two States was due only to a desire to fulfil the promises made in 1941. Their suspicions were directed particularly against the British Minister, Sir E. L. Spears, who continued to champion the cause of the Levant States with force and enthusiasm even after he was succeeded as Minister by Mr. T. A. Shone in December, 1944. Apart from the disagreement on general policy, there were other causes of tension: the difficulties arising from the combination of a British supreme command with a French territorial command, the existence of a network of British political and security officers, the inevitable clash of two very different temperaments and administrative systems.

This phase came to an end with the restoration of national government, the Lebanese crisis of November, 1943, and the subsequent agreement for the transfer of powers. In 1944 a new phase opened: the search for a definitive settlement of Franco-Syrian and Franco-Lebanese relations. In this new phase it was no longer possible to delay the attempt to reconcile the two aspects of British policy. Short of denouncing one or other of her undertakings, only one course was possible for her. She must try to persuade both sides to make some sort of definitive agreement on paper. The exact terms of the agreement were secondary, so long as France secured such concessions as might be regarded as constituting a privileged position. What was important was that an agreement of some kind should be made and neither side should feel it had been forced out of its position or had lost prestige. To this end it was important to prevent a conflict or another crisis like that of November, 1943; and an essential means of preventing conflict was to refrain from leading either side to believe that, should a crisis come, it was certain of British support.

A definitive solution could only be reached, if at all, by free agreement; there was no question of forcing the Syrians and Lebanese to make a treaty. Nor, if a treaty was not made, could there be any question of abrogating the declarations of independence or a repetition of what had happened in 1920. On the other hand, should the French fail to secure a guarantee

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
LEBANON ME 1

of their position, there was no question of Great Britain's trying to usurp their place or profit from the wreckage of their hopes.

S 648
L 648

Finally, in all this complex situation, Great Britain must remember that she was only one of a number of interested Powers, who had their own views on the question and who had not endorsed the Lyttelton-de Gaulle agreement. While trying to secure the fulfilment of that agreement, Great Britain could not allow her policy to drift too far from that of her Allies.

This general line of policy was authoritatively defined by Mr. Churchill in his speech in the House of Commons on February 27th, 1945. Reporting on the Crimea Conference, and his subsequent meetings with Arab leaders in Egypt, he said :

> 'Finally, we had the pleasure of a long discussion with President Shukri of Syria, in which we did our utmost to enjoin a friendly attitude towards the French and to encourage negotiation for a suitable settlement with the French, affecting not only Syria but also the Lebanon. I must make clear once and for all the position of His Majesty's Government in respect of Syria and the Lebanon, and in relation to our French Allies. That position is governed by the statements made in 1941, in which the independence of these Levant States was definitely declared by Great Britain and France. At that time, and ever since, the British Government has made it clear that they would never seek to supplant French influence by British influence in the Levant States. We are determined also to respect the independence of these States and to use our best endeavours to preserve a special position for France, in view of the many cultural and historic connexions which France has so long established with Syria. We hope it may be possible for the French to preserve that special position. We trust that these States will be firmly established by the authority of the world organization, and that French privilege will also be recognized.
>
> 'However, I must make it clear that it is not for us alone to defend by force either Syrian and Lebanese independence or French privilege. We seek both and we do not believe that they are incompatible. Too much must not therefore be placed on the shoulders of Great Britain alone.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MDI
LEBANON MDI

L
648
S
648

> We have to take note of the fact that Russia and the United States recognize and favour Syrian and Lebanese independence, but do not favour any special position for any other foreign country. All these and many other matters affecting the Middle East are fitting and necessary subjects for the Peace Conference, at which we must resolutely strive for final settlements of lasting peace between all the States and races comprised in the Middle East and in the Eastern basin of the Mediterranean.'[1]

II

The last sentence of Mr. Churchill's statement referred to a new factor which had made itself felt in the past year. Since 1941, the United States of America had refrained from recognizing the independence of Syria and Lebanon, and had made it clear that she would not give recognition until the independence of the two States became a reality. By 1944, the transfer of powers had reached a point where the U.S. Government felt itself justified in changing its attitude. In September, it formally recognized the independence of the two States. Mr. George Wadsworth, who had previously been American Consul-General and Diplomatic Agent, was appointed the first U.S. Minister to the two States.

Already, in July, the Government of the U.S.S.R. had accorded its recognition. It appointed M. Solod as its first Minister in October.

Both the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., at the time of that recognition and subsequently, made it clear that they recognized Syrian and Lebanese independence unconditionally and that they did not accept the privileged and pre-eminent position of France or any other Power in the Levant. In other words, they did not endorse the Lyttelton-de Gaulle agreement of 1941.

A number of the States also gave their recognition, and by the end of the year the only important Allied or neutral State which had not yet done so was Turkey. A consequence of this change in the international status of the two countries was the appointment of a number of Syrian and Lebanese diplomatic and Consular representatives in foreign countries. The formal sovereignty of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments was further emphasized by their declaration of war on Germany and Japan in February, 1945, their signature of the declaration

---

[1] *Parliamentary Debates*, 5th Series, Vol. 408, col. 1,290.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria ADI
LEBANON MEI

of the United Nations in April and their invitation to the San Francisco Conference.

L
648
S
648

12

Another development which greatly strengthened the position of the two States was the establishment of the Arab League. In the second half of 1943 and the first half of 1944 the Egyptian Prime Minister, Mustafa an-Nahhas Pasha, had held a series of conversations on Arab unity with the representatives of other Arab Governments. On their completion, he decided to summon a preparatory conference or committee to draw a plan of union. The Committee met in Alexandria on September 28th, 1944. It was attended by representatives of the Egyptian, Iraqi, Syrian, Lebanese, Transjordanian, Sa'udi-Arabian and Yemeni Governments, and by a representative of the Palestinian-Arab parties. Its work was completed by the publication on October 7th of a 'Protocol', signed by the representatives of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan and Iraq, and later adhered to by Sa'udi-Arabia and Yemen; the Palestinian, as not representing a Government, did not sign it.

The Protocol proclaimed the formation of a League of Arab States, composed of the independent Arab States which agreed to join it. It was to have a Council, on which the States would be represented on an equal footing. Its task would be to supervise the execution of agreements concluded between these States, to organize periodical meetings and to co-ordinate their political policies. The Council's decisions would be applicable to those who accepted them, but would be executory and obligatory in cases where disagreement arose between two members of the League and they sought the Council's intervention for its settlement. It would be forbidden to have recourse to force for the settlement of any dispute between members. Each State would have the right to conclude with other States, members or non-members of the League, treaties which were not in contradiction with the text or spirit of this agreement; no member was to follow a foreign policy prejudicial to the policy of the League or any of its members. The Council would offer its mediation in any conflict that might arise between members of the League or with non-members.

A Commission was to be formed immediately by members of the Preparatory Committee with a view to drawing up the

11: Hourani 5-4 (no date) 1946 MDI Syria MDI
LEBANON AEI

L 648
S 648

statutes of the Council and examining political questions which might form the subject of agreements between the Arab States. Arab States represented on the Committee would co-operate closely on economic, financial, cultural, social and other matters. Commissions of experts for each type of question would be set up to draft plans for co-operation in these matters. When all the commissions should have concluded their work, the Preparatory Committee would meet to examine the results of their studies with a view to convening the general Arab Congress.

The Committee hoped that in the future the Arab countries would consolidate these first results with others, particularly if, after the conclusion of the war, institutions were created which would unite the nations with closer and stronger ties.

The Protocol also contained two special decisions, the one relating to Lebanon and the other to Palestine. The former stated that 'the Arab States represented in the Preparatory Committee affirm unanimously their respect for the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon within its present frontiers, which have already been recognized by their Governments after Lebanon had followed a policy of independence as proclaimed by her Government in its ministerial programme, which was unanimously approved by the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies on October 7th, 1943.'

The decision in regard to Palestine stated that Palestine constituted one of the important elements in the Arab world; the rights of the Arabs could not be touched without danger to the peace and stability of the Arab world. The Committee considered that the engagements entered into by Great Britain, comprising the cessation of Jewish immigration, the safeguarding of lands belonging to Arabs and the gradual evolution of Palestine towards independence, represented acquired rights of the Arabs and their execution would be a step towards the desired aim. The Committee proclaimed its support for the cause of Palestine. While sympathizing with the sufferings of the Jews, it thought that nothing could be more arbitrary and unjust than to settle the question of the Jews of Europe by another injustice, the victims of which would be the Arabs of Palestine.

The political sub-committee of the Preparatory Committee met in Cairo in February, 1945, to draft the constitution of the Arab League. After its work was completed, the Preparatory

Committee met once more in Cairo on March 17th. It L
included representations of the Egyptian, Iraqi, Syrian, 6418
Lebanese, Transjordanian and Sa’udi-Arabian Governments S
and of the Arabs of Palestine. On March 22nd the representa- 6418
tives of these six Governments signed the ‘ Pact of the Arab League ’ at the first meeting of the Plenary Arab Congress. It was not signed by the Palestinian delegate, since he did not represent an Arab Government. A copy was sent to the Imam of Yemen for his adherence.

The Pact, which differed considerably from the Protocol of Alexandria and in general was less binding upon the signatories, stated that the Arab League was composed of the independent Arab States signatory to the Pact ; any independent Arab State could join the League on application. The object of the League was to draw closer the relations between member-States, to co-ordinate their political action, safeguard their independence and sovereignty, and interest itself in general in questions concerning the Arab countries ; also to ensure that, within the framework of the régime and the conditions prevailing in each State, a close co-operation should exist in economic and financial questions, matters of communications, cultural matters, questions connected with nationality, passports and extradition, social affairs and public health. The League would have a Council on which each member-State would have one vote. The Council would try to realize the objects of the League, supervise the execution of agreements concluded between members, and determine the means by which the League would collaborate with such international organizations as might be formed in future. There would also be special commissions for each of the questions enumerated above ; representatives of other Arab States would be able to participate in these commissions on conditions to be determined by the Council.

The Pact forbade the use of force to settle disputes between member-States. Decisions of the Council would be binding in disputes not affecting the independence, sovereignty or territorial integrity of the States and in which the contending parties sought settlement by the Council. The Council would mediate in any dispute likely to lead to war between two member-States or a member-State and a third State. Decisions in cases of arbitration and mediation would be by a majority vote. In the case of aggression or the threat of it, the

S 648 L 648

State attacked could demand the immediate summoning of the Council, which would decide on the necessary steps by unanimous vote. Unanimous decisions of the Council would be binding on all members of the League, majority decisions only on those States which accepted them.

Each member-State undertook to respect the system of government of the other members and to abstain from any action tending to change that system. Member-States wishing to establish closer relations than those envisaged in the Pact might conclude agreements to this end.

The permanent seat of the League was to be Cairo, but the Council could decide to meet elsewhere. The Council would meet in ordinary session twice a year, in extraordinary session when necessary. The League would have a permanent Secretariat-General. (An Egyptian, Abdur-Rahman Azzam Bey, was appointed the first Secretary-General.) The expenses of the League would be shared by the member-States. The presidency of the Council would rotate among the representatives of the member-States.

Any member-State might withdraw from the League after a year's notice, and the Council might exclude any member which had not fulfilled its obligations, by unanimous vote. The Pact could be modified by a two-thirds majority of the member-States. The Pact was to come into force after four States had ratified it.

An annex to the Pact declared that the *de jure* international existence and independence of Palestine since her liberation from Ottoman rule could not be questioned. If, for reasons independent of her will, the external attributes of independence had not yet materialized, this could not constitute an obstacle to the participation of Palestine in the work of the Council. In these circumstances, and until she should enjoy the attributes of independence, the Council would choose an Arab representative from Palestine to participate in its work.

A further annex dealt with the participation of Arab countries not members of the Council in the work of the commissions to be set up under the Pact. The signatory States recommended the Council to go as far as possible in cooperating with them, and to make all efforts to learn their needs and understand their aspirations, and to use all political means possible to improve their conditions and secure their future.

A week later, on March 31st, the Syrian Chamber ratified the Pact. It was ratified by the Lebanese Chamber on April 7th.

S 648
L 648

The formation of an Arab League, however loose, had immediate repercussions on the situation in the Levant States and will probably have further repercussions in the future. It made clear that in any conflict which might arise over the independence of Syria and Lebanon, they would have the full support of the Arab world; at the same time it provided another reason why the two States should keep their hands free and not undertake any commitments which might prevent their fulfilling their new obligations as members of the League.

The establishment of the Arab League may have particularly far-reaching consequences for Lebanon. Both at Alexandria and at Cairo the Arab States made it clear that they were prepared to go a long way to allay the fears which the thought of Arab union aroused in the minds of a section of the Lebanese Christians. The Lebanese article of the Alexandria Protocol emphasized that so long as Lebanon was willing to align her policy with that of the other Arab States she need not fear any demands upon her or claims for frontier revision, and could hope (as had been proved in November, 1943) for their support and help in her struggle for independence; while there is reason to believe that the clauses inserted into the Cairo Pact safeguarding sovereignty and freedom of action of the member-States were due to the anxiety of the Arab States to do anything possible to win the adherence of Lebanon. If their efforts should be vain, they would no doubt be forced to reconsider their attitude towards Lebanon.

APPENDIX A

TEXTS OF DOCUMENTS

000
1. The Mandate for Syria and Lebanon, July 24th, 1922.
2. Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between France and Syria, December 22nd, 1936.
3. Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between France and Lebanon, November 13th, 1936.
4. Exchange of Letters between Jamil Mardam Bey and M. de Tessan, December 11th, 1937.
5. Bonnet-Mardam Declaration and Protocol, November 14th, 1938.
6. Decrees of the High Commissioner in regard to the autonomy of Jebel Druze, the Alawis and the Jazirah, 1939.
7. Fundamental Principles of Future Status of Alexandretta, adopted by the League Council, January 27th, 1937.
8. Franco-Turkish Agreements on the Sanjaq of Alexandretta, July 4th, 1938.
9. Franco-Turkish Agreements on the cession of Alexandretta, June 23rd, 1939.
10. Proclamation of General Dentz concerning the Syrian Constitution, April 2nd, 1941.
11. General Catroux's Proclamation to the Syrians and Lebanese, June 8th, 1941.
12. General de Gaulle's Letter to General Catroux, June 24th, 1941.
13. Convention on the Cessation of Hostilities in Syria and Lebanon, July 12th, 1941.
14. General Catroux's Proclamation of Syrian Independence, September 28th, 1941.
15. General Catroux's Proclamation of Lebanese Independence, November 26th, 1941.
16. Agreement and Protocols on the Transfer of the Syro-Lebanese Common Interests, December 22nd, 1943-January 5th, 1944.

5 No. 1 : *The Mandate for Syria and Lebanon, July 24th, 1922.*[1]

648 *The Council of the League of Nations,*

L 648 WHEREAS, The Principal Allied Powers have agreed that the territory of Syria and the Lebanon, which formerly belonged to the Turkish Empire, shall, within such boundaries as may be fixed by the said Powers, be entrusted to a Mandatory charged with the duty of rendering administrative advice and assistance to the population, in accordance with the provisions of Article 22 (paragraph 4) of the Covenant of the League of Nations ; and

---

[1] Q. Wright, *Mandates under the League of Nations* (Chicago, 1930), pp. 607-11.

11: Hourani 8-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MDI
LEBANON ME1

WHEREAS, The Principal Allied Powers have decided that the mandate for the territory referred to above should be conferred on the Government of the French Republic, which has accepted it; and

S
648
L
648

WHEREAS, The terms of this mandate, which are defined in the articles below, have also been accepted by the Government of the French Republic and submitted to the Council of the League for approval; and

WHEREAS, The Government of the French Republic has undertaken to exercise this mandate on behalf of the League of Nations, in conformity with the following provisions; and

WHEREAS, By the aforementioned Article 22 (paragraph 8), it is provided that the degree of authority, control or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory, not having been previously agreed upon by the members of the League, shall be explicitly defined by the Council of the League of Nations;

Confirming the said mandate, defines its terms as follows:

Article 1: The Mandatory shall frame, within a period of three years from the coming into force of this mandate, an organic law for Syria and the Lebanon.

This organic law shall be framed in agreement with the native authorities and shall take into account the rights, interests and wishes of all the population inhabiting the said territory. The Mandatory shall further enact measures to facilitate the progressive development of Syria and the Lebanon as independent states. Pending the coming into effect of the organic law, the Government of Syria and the Lebanon shall be conducted in accordance with the spirit of this mandate.

The Mandatory shall, as far as circumstances permit, encourage local autonomy.

Article 2: The Mandatory may maintain its troops in the said territory for its defence. It shall further be empowered, until the entry into force of the organic law and the re-establishment of public security, to organize such local militia as may be necessary for the defence of the territory and to employ this militia for defence and also for the maintenance of order. These local forces may only be recruited from the inhabitants of the said territory.

The said militia shall thereafter be under the local authorities, subject to the authority and the control which the Mandatory shall retain over these forces. It shall not be used for purposes other than those above specified save with the consent of the Mandatory.

Nothing shall preclude Syria and the Lebanon from contributing to the cost of the maintenance of the forces of the Mandatory stationed in the territory.

L
648
S
648

The Mandatory shall at all times possess the right to make use of the ports, railways and means of communication of Syria and the Lebanon for the passage of its troops and of all materials, supplies and fuel.

Article 3: The Mandatory shall be entrusted with the exclusive control of the foreign relations of Syria and the Lebanon and with the right to issue exequaturs to the consuls appointed by foreign Powers. Nationals of Syria and the Lebanon living outside the limits of the territory shall be under the diplomatic and consular protection of the Mandatory.

Article 4: The Mandatory shall be responsible for seeing that no part of the territory of Syria and the Lebanon is ceded or leased or in any way placed under the control of a foreign Power.

Article 5: The privileges and immunities of foreigners, including the benefits of consular jurisdiction and protection as formerly enjoyed by capitulation or usage in the Ottoman Empire, shall not be applicable in Syria and the Lebanon. Foreign consular tribunals shall, however, continue to perform their duties until the coming into force of the new legal organization provided for in Article 6.

Unless the Powers whose nationals enjoyed the aforementioned privileges and immunities on August 1st, 1924, shall have previously renounced the right to their re-establishment, or shall have agreed to their non-application during a specified period, these privileges and immunities shall at the expiration of the mandate be immediately re-established in their entirety or with such modifications as may have been agreed upon between the Powers concerned.

Article 6: The Mandatory shall establish in Syria and the Lebanon a judicial system which shall assure to natives as well as to foreigners a complete guarantee of their rights.

Respect for the personal status of the various peoples and for their religious interests shall be fully guaranteed. In particular, the control and administration of Wakfs shall be exercised in complete accordance with religious law and the disposition of the founders.

Article 7: Pending the conclusion of special extradition agreements, the extradition treaties at present in force between foreign Powers and the Mandatory shall apply within the territory of Syria and the Lebanon.

Article 8: The Mandatory shall ensure to all complete freedom of conscience and the free exercise of all forms of worship which are consonant with public order and morality. No discrimination of any kind shall be made between the inhabitants of Syria and the Lebanon on the ground of differences in race, religion or language.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
LEBANON ME1

L
648
S
648

The Mandatory shall encourage public instruction, which shall be given through the medium of the native languages in use in the territory of Syria and the Lebanon.

The right of each community to maintain its own schools for the instruction and education of its own members in its own language, while conforming to such educational requirements of a general nature as the administration may impose, shall not be denied or impaired.

Article 9: The Mandatory shall refrain from all interference in the administration of the Councils of management (Conseils de fabrique) or in the management of religious communities and sacred shrines belonging to the various religions, the immunity of which has been expressly guaranteed.

Article 10: The supervision exercised by the Mandatory over the religious missions in Syria and the Lebanon shall be limited to the maintenance of public order and good government; the activities of these religious missions shall in no way be restricted, nor shall their members be subjected to any restrictive measures on the ground of nationality, provided that their activities are confined to the domain of religion.

The religious missions may also concern themselves with education and relief, subject to the general right of regulation and control by the Mandatory or the local government, in regard to education, public instruction and charitable relief.

Article 11: The Mandatory shall see that there is no discrimination in Syria or the Lebanon against the nationals, including societies and associations, of any state member of the League of Nations as compared with its own nationals, including societies and associations, or with the nationals of any other foreign state in matters concerning taxation or commerce, the exercise of professions or industries, or navigation, or in the treatment of ships, or aircraft. Similarly, there shall be no discrimination in Syria or the Lebanon against goods originating in or destined for any of the said states; there shall be freedom of transit, under equitable conditions, across the said territory.

Subject to the above, the Mandatory may impose or cause to be imposed by the local governments such taxes and customs duties as it may consider necessary. The Mandatory, or the local governments acting under its advice, may also conclude on grounds of contiguity any special customs arrangements with an adjoining country.

The Mandatory may take or cause to be taken, subject to the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, such steps as it may think best to ensure the development of the natural resources of the said territory and to safeguard the interests of the local population.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
LEBANON MEI

5
648
L
648

Concessions for the development of these natural resources shall be granted without distinction of nationality between the nationals of all states members of the League of Nations, but on condition that they do not infringe upon the authority of the local government. Concessions in the nature of a general monopoly shall not be granted. This clause shall in no way limit the right of the Mandatory to create monopolies of a purely fiscal character in the interest of the territory of Syria and the Lebanon, and with a view to assuring to the territory the fiscal resources which would appear best adapted to the local needs, or, in certain cases, with a view to developing the natural resources either directly by the state or through an organization under its control, provided that this does not involve either directly or indirectly the creation of a monopoly of the natural resources in favour of the Mandatory or its nationals, nor involve any preferential treatment which would be incompatible with the economic, commercial and industrial equality guaranteed above.

Article 12: The Mandatory shall adhere, on behalf of Syria and the Lebanon, to any general international agreements already existing, or which may be concluded hereafter with the approval of the League of Nations, in respect of the following: the slave trade, the traffic in drugs, the traffic in arms and ammunition, commercial equality, freedom of transit and navigation, aerial navigation, postal, telegraphic or wireless communications, and measures for the protection of literature, art or industries.

Article 13: The Mandatory shall secure the adhesion of Syria and the Lebanon, so far as social, religious and other conditions permit, to such measures of common utility as may be adopted by the League of Nations for preventing and combating disease, including diseases of animals and plants.

Article 14: The Mandatory shall draw up and put into force within twelve months from this date a law of antiquities in conformity with the following provisions. This law shall ensure equality of treatment in the matter of excavations and archæological research to the nationals of all states members of the League of Nations.

(1) "Antiquity" means any construction or any product of human activity earlier than the year 1700 A.D.

(2) The law for the protection of antiquities shall proceed by encouragement rather than by threat.

Any person who, having discovered an antiquity without being furnished with the authorization referred to in paragraph 5, reports the same to an official of the competent department, shall be rewarded according to the value of the discovery.

(3) No antiquity may be disposed of except to the competent

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1
Lebanon ME1

department, unless this department renounces the acquisition of any such antiquity. S 648

No antiquity may leave the country without an export licence from the said department. L 648

(4) Any person who maliciously or negligently destroys or damages an antiquity shall be liable to a penalty to be fixed.

(5) No clearing of ground or digging with the object of finding antiquities shall be permitted, under penalty of fine, except to persons authorized by the competent department.

(6) Equitable terms shall be fixed for expropriation, temporary or permanent, of lands which might be of historical or archæological interest.

(7) Authorization to excavate shall only be granted to persons who show sufficient guarantees of archæological experience. The administration of Syria and the Lebanon shall not, in granting these authorizations, act in such a way as to exclude scholars of any nation without good grounds.

(8) The proceeds of excavations may be divided between the excavator and the competent department in a proportion fixed by that department. If division seems impossible for scientific reasons, the excavator shall receive a fair indemnity in lieu of a part of the find.

Article 15: Upon the coming into force of the organic law referred to in Article 1, an arrangement shall be made between the Mandatory and the local governments for reimbursement by the latter of all expenses incurred by the Mandatory in organizing the administration, developing local resources, and carrying out permanent public works, of which the country retains the benefit. Such arrangement shall be communicated to the Council of the League of Nations.

Article 16: French and Arabic shall be the official languages of Syria and the Lebanon.

Article 17: The Mandatory shall make to the Council of the League of Nations an annual report to the satisfaction of the Council as to the measures taken during the year to carry out the provisions of this mandate. Copies of all laws and regulations promulgated during the year shall be attached to the said report.

Article 18: The consent of the Council of the League of Nations is required for any modification of the terms of this mandate.

Article 19: On the termination of the mandate, the Council of the League of Nations shall use its influence to safeguard for the future the fulfilment by the Government of Syria and the Lebanon of the financial obligations, including pensions and allowances, regularly assumed by the administration of Syria or of the Lebanon during the period of the mandate.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MDI
LEBANON ME 1

S
648
L
648

Article 20: The Mandatory agrees that, if any dispute whatever should arise between the Mandatory and another Member of the League of Nations relating to the interpretation or the application of the provisions of the mandate, such dispute, if it cannot be settled by negotiation, shall be submitted to the Permanent Court of International Justice provided for by Article 14 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

The present instrument shall be deposited in original in the archives of the League of Nations and certified copies shall be forwarded by the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to all members of the League.

Done at London on the twenty-fourth day of July, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-two.

OCO

No. 2: *The Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between France and Syria, December 22nd, 1936.*[1]

Le Gouvernement de la République française et le Gouvernement de la République syrienne, Vu l'intention exprimée par le Gouvernement français devant la Société des Nations de conclure, en tenant compte de l'évolution déjà accomplie, un traité avec le Gouvernement syrien ;

Considérant les progrès réalisés dans la voie de l'affermissement de la Syrie comme nation indépendante ;

Vu l'accord des deux Gouvernements pour réaliser, suivant un programme bien précisé, toutes conditions propres à assurer l'admission de la Syrie à la Société des Nations, dans un délai de trois ans, à dater des formalités de ratification ;

Ont convenu à cet effet de conclure un traité d'amitié et d'alliance pour définir sur les bases de complète liberté, souveraineté et indépendance, les relations qui subsisteront entre les deux États après la cessation du mandat, et d'en fixer, dans les conventions, protocoles et lettres annexes qui font partie intégrante du traité, les conditions et modalités d'application.

A cette fin, Son Excellence le Président de la République française et Son Excellence le Président de la République syrienne, ont délégué comme leurs plénipotentiaires :

> S. E. le Comte de Martel, ambassadeur, Haut-Commissaire ; LL. El Djemil bey Mardam, Président du Conseil, Sadallah bey El Djabri, Ministre de l'Intérieur et des Affaires étrangères, Choucri bey Kouatli, Ministre des Finances et de la Défense ;

qui, s'étant communiqué leurs pouvoirs et les ayant trouvés en due forme, ont conclu ce qui suit :

---

[1] Ministère des Affaires Etrangères : *Rapport à la Société des Nations sur la Situation de la Syrie et du Liban, 1936* (Paris, 1937), pp. 201-28.

14:International Bank S-5(1954)1955 MD1 Syria MD1

Table 1,[3] reflects, of course, the general structure of the economy. As already indicated, raw cotton represents well over a third of Syria's exports, and cereals, livestock and raw wool almost another third. In recent years, however, textiles have accounted for nearly one-tenth of the value of exports. As might be expected, imports are more diverse in character. Textile materials and manufactures, machinery, petroleum products and fruits and vegetables are among the principal imports; iron and steel, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, precious metals, motor vehicles and timber are also important. 439

Despite the dissolution of the Syrian-Lebanese economic union, Lebanon has remained Syria's principal trading partner, taking almost a quarter of Syria's exports and contributing around 10% of its imports. Three countries—Lebanon, France and the United Kingdom—buy over half of Syria's exports; and five countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Lebanon and Western Germany—supply between 50% and 60% of its imports. In the three years 1951-53 about 41% of Syria's exports was marketed in other Arab countries which, however, supplied only 18% of Syria's imports. [448]

Syria's normal trade deficit is offset, on the current account of the balance of international payments, by local expenditures and oil transit payments made by foreign oil companies, by UNRWA[4] expenditures in Syria and by emigrant remittances. On capital account, there is evidently some continued net foreign investment, particularly by Lebanese, and some repatriation of capital by Syrians returning to their homeland. A considerable volume of bank funds has flowed to Syria partly because there has been a shift in the financing of Syria's foreign trade from Beirut to Aleppo and Damascus and partly because foreign banks have needed more funds to meet the credit needs of an expanding economy. Although the movement of these bank funds shows sharp seasonal fluctuations, there has apparently been a general upward trend in the amount of foreign banking advances in recent years. Total foreign exchange receipts and payments were not far out of balance in 1950, 1951 and 1952, but in 1953 Syrian gold and foreign exchange reserves, valued at the free rate, increased by £S 51 million. Foreign exchange and gold reserves at the free rate rose from £S 114.3 million at the end of 1951 to £S 157 million at 457

---

[3] See also Annex A, p. 213 *et seq.*

[4] United Nations Relief and Works Administration, charged with the care of Arab refugees from Palestine.

433 provision made for gradual reduction of the duties. At the same time we
654 suggest that the whole tariff schedule be re-examined. By and large it
651 cannot be said that the general level of tariffs is excessively high, particu-
457 larly since ad valorem rates are levied on imports valued at the official rate of exchange, and this entails an undervaluation of about 40% compared to the actual exchange rate. In fact, we recommend elsewhere that tariff rates be assessed on the basis of actual foreign exchange rates for the purpose of increasing government revenues. This should not be construed, however, as a proposal to raise all tariffs irrespective of their nature. On the contrary, we would suggest that, as part of the general revision of the schedule, those rates which are primarily protective in character should as far as possible be reduced for the purpose of encouraging outside competition and lowering prices. If necessary, such reductions could be graduated over a period of time.

434 *Possibilities of a Larger Market*

648 The expansion and, above all, the diversification of industrial output in Syria is restricted by the rather small domestic market. In a country of only 3.6 million people with low purchasing power it is generally possible to manufacture only a limited range of articles which are used widely enough to warrant production on an economic scale. Broader industrial opportunities are likely to emerge only if a larger market is initially available. In the case of Syria it should be possible to establish such a market in cooperation with other Arab countries, all of which suffer from a similar handicap in the development of their industries. Over recent years the Arab countries have increasingly stressed their community of interest and the need for closer cooperation. The field of industrial development offers a particularly challenging opportunity for common endeavor. We do not suggest, of course, that the types of industrial enterprises to be developed by each country should be the subject of joint government decision. There should be consultation in cases where particular ventures are to be launched with special government assistance. In the main, however, the location and development of industry should be decided by the free play of competitive forces operating in a larger, common Arab market.

To a limited extent the Arab countries have already taken steps to develop such a market. Syria has concluded bilateral agreements with Lebanon and Jordan which free certain products from import restrictions and provide for a number of reciprocal tariff reductions and even exemptions, 434 and has been considering the renewal in some form of the close 448 economic ties with Lebanon which prevailed before 1950. All the Arab countries joined in 1953 in an Inter-Arab Economic Agreement providing for tariff reductions on a considerable number of industrial products without, however, affecting other barriers to trade.

The establishment of a common Arab market will undoubtedly take time. The history of the Benelux economic union demonstrates that it can only be achieved gradually and then only if there is a full understanding among the partners of each other's problems and a willingness to make concessions and sacrifices. A single market cannot be established simply by a progressive elimination of trade barriers; it entails also a gradual coordination of those economic policies and measures which govern the conditions under which enterprise in the various countries operates. To bring national cost and price structures into line with each other and to equalize the conditions of competition, it will be necessary to harmonize, step by step, fiscal, monetary and exchange policies, the terms governing access to raw materials and equipment and the legislation regulating labor conditions and providing assistance to industry. If this can be accomplished, the possibilities of further industrial development in the Arab world are likely to be significantly greater.

Establishment of an Investment Bank 454

The mission attaches great importance to the establishment of an institution capable of furnishing both technical and financial assistance to industry. When industrialists have insufficient capital for investment at present, they can turn only to the government; the banks provide only working capital. As already indicated, the government began in 1949 to guarantee loans for this purpose through the Banque de Syrie et du Liban. During the period June 1949-January 1952, 18 such loans totaling £S 23.6 million were made, although by the end of 1953 repayments had reduced the balance to £S 13.4 million. This guaranteed-loan scheme was suspended in 1952 but revived at the beginning of 1954, subject to a limitation of £S 15 million on the entire amount outstanding.

For a number of reasons we believe that this method of financial assistance ought to be abandoned. Although the interest rate of 3% which has been made possible only because of the government guarantee and the

652 Treasury.[41] The other type of public deposits which has risen rapidly consists of various autonomous government enterprises and agencies. A breakdown of these, available only for the end of 1953, is given below (in millions of Syrian pounds):

Exchange Office	6.9
Council of Money and Credit	2.0
PTT	4.3
Power, tramway and water companies	4.5
Railways	1.2
Port of Latakia	0.9
Agricultural Bank	2.2
Cereals Office	19.7
Tobacco Monopoly	4.6
Others	2.9
Total	49.2

The drawing down of public deposits is likely to have the same effect as deficit financing, particularly since it is doubtful that a decline in public deposits would be accompanied by a contraction of bank credit to the private sector. The government should regard these Treasury balances as a resource in lieu of, rather than in addition to, borrowing from the banking system; it should approach their use with the same caution it employs in considering deficit financing. The use of the accumulated balances of autonomous public entities should also be carefully watched. Finally, it would be well to require that all public deposits be kept with the Central Bank or, in the interim, with the BSL, so that the government can, if necessary, take effective steps to ensure that they do not have an undue effect on bank credit. Recently there has been a tendency to shift public deposits to other banks where it will be less easy to control their impact on credit.

652 *Foreign Aid and Borrowing*

648
457 Our expectation that additional resources of £S 175 million to £S 215 million may be available from abroad rests on the assumption that Syria

---

[41] The mission was unable to obtain information on the extent to which the Treasury is holding funds for the account of others. The new monetary statute envisages the ultimate establishment of a special Caisse des Depots et Consignations under the central bank to hold such deposits held on behalf of third parties; it is certainly advisable to have a clearcut distinction between the Treasury's own funds and those held in trust for others.

14:International Bank S-5 (1954)1955 MD1 Syria MD1

will be able to borrow for certain development projects and that the Syrian 652 government will accept offers of foreign aid. 648

Certain projects are likely to merit foreign loans. General economic 457 prospects warrant the expectation that Syria can contract some foreign debt and expect to serve it. At present there is no foreign debt except for the compensation due to the former foreign owners of the nationalized public utilities and a $6 million loan from Saudi-Arabia. Both the immediate and long-term prospects of the balance of international payments appear favorable. While there may be some decline in the price of exported cereals and cottons, continued expansion in the volume of exports, although at a lower rate than in the past, will probably more than offset it. A rapid rise in imports is unlikely to occur as long as monetary stability is maintained. Moreover, foreign exchange policy can be kept sufficiently flexible to enable the government to influence the volume of international payments and receipts.

The Syrian government has so far been reluctant to accept proffers of 652 foreign aid. The United States in 1954 offered to include Syria in its 648 economic aid program, and this offer presumably remains open. We have assumed here that Syria will ultimately consider it advantageous to accept. All other Arab countries have in recent years received such aid apparently without suffering any infringement of their independence. In the last five years the United States has allocated about $111 million in economic and technical assistance to the Arab countries. For 1954-55 alone almost $64 million has been assured to Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. If Syria does decline similar aid, it may well face the need of curtailing the development program we have outlined.

It might be appropriate to point out also that Syria signed an agreement with UNRWA in October 1952 under which $30 million was to become available for economic development projects that would assist in the rehabilitation of the Arab refugees from Palestine, who in Syria number some 85,000. Less than $2 million of these funds have actually been committed. Because of its insistence that the refugees be repatriated, the government has been reluctant to use the UNRWA development funds. At the same time it might be mentioned that the Director of UNRWA and his Advisory Commission, on which Syria is represented, agreed in a special report to the United Nations General Assembly in November 1954 that UNRWA should pursue its long-term task of "assisting the refugees

652 to become self-supporting," involving particularly UNRWA participation
648 "in the economic development of the host countries, thus making it possible for the refugees and the countries in which they live to benefit jointly by the combination of available rehabilitation funds and those from other sources."[42] The uncertainties regarding Syria's acceptance of these UNRWA funds are such, however, that we have not assumed that they will actually be used.

Municipal Financing

361 A brief word should be said regarding the financing of development
652 expenditures by the municipalities. In a number of places in this report we have suggested that certain expenditures be shouldered by municipalities. We have envisaged municipal investment expenditures in housing, schools and community facilities totaling about £S 103 million for the six-year period. This implies an annual outlay of around £S 17 million, compared to a probable average of some £S 12 million in recent years (exclusive of expenditures on Aleppo water supply). We have provided for part of this sum by recommending that the central government allocate £S 8 million for community water supplies (exclusive of Aleppo). Thus the municipalities will have to find a net sum of between £S 4 million and £S 5 million per year for additional investment.

Unfortunately no comprehensive information was available in Syria on actual municipal expenditures and receipts. The budgets of all municipalities were reported to have risen from £S 24.4 million in 1949 to £S 29.6 million in 1952 and further to £S 37.6 million in 1953. Data obtained by the mission from a scattering of municipalities indicate that municipal revenues—which are derived both from local taxes and surcharges on certain national taxes—have increased rather rapidly. This lends support to the tentative belief that the municipalities can bear the additional proposed expenditures, although probably only if they are not required to reduce the outstanding amount of existing indebtedness. We strongly recommend, however, that the government undertake a survey of municipal finances with a view to determining whether the municipalities can actually meet their future requirements.

---

[42] See U.N. General Assembly A/2717/Add. 1, 5 November 1954.

14:International Bank S-5 (1954)1955 MD1 Syria MD1

ANNEX A *INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC POSITION*

1 FOREIGN TRADE

Statistical Limitations

439 [L48] Until March 13, 1950, Syria and Lebanon were joined in a Customs Union and separate trade data for the two countries were not collected. Statistics for Syrian trade first appeared in 1950 but do not cover the full year. They are also less reliable than those for succeeding years in view of the understandable lack of experience on the part of Syrian customs officers with enforcement of tariffs and recording trade.

Customs statistics record the value of imports at official rates of exchange of the Syrian pound, which differ from the prevailing free market exchange rates at which import transactions are conducted. This in itself necessitates adjustments for every currency used. On the basis of certain broad assumptions, such adjustments have been made by the mission for balance of payments estimates, but could not be made in the foreign trade statistics because of the lack of data on which to base an adjustment of the value of specific items.

The extended land frontiers, particularly in some of the more sparsely inhabited parts of the country, facilitate smuggling. Re-exports of gold were not recorded as such prior to 1954 because gold exports were forbidden.

Finally, there is believed to be a certain amount of both under- and over-estimation of the value of goods as declared to the customs authorities, especially in trade with neighboring countries, and not all these statements can be corrected.

It follows that Syria's pre-1951 foreign trade cannot be properly assessed at all and the analysis of data for the last three years must allow for margins of error due to the many adjustments based largely on estimates.

Foreign Trade of the Customs Union

Table 1 records the total value, in Syrian-Lebanese pounds, of the trade of the Syrian-Lebanese Customs Union since 1945.

[p. 212 CONTAINS NO TEXTUAL MATERIAL]

15: Khadduri S-4 (no date) 1951 MDl Syria MDl

The Middle East Journal

VOLUME 5 SPRING 1951 NUMBER 2

CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN SYRIA

With Emphasis on the Constitution of 1950

Majid Khadduri

642
618

SYRIA HAS experienced a number of constitutional vicissitudes since its separation from the Ottoman Empire after World War I. A monarchy for a short period under Faysal, it then passed, against its will, into the position of a mandated territory under French administration. Another eight years elapsed before the struggle between the Mandatory and the Syrian nationalists was sufficiently resolved to permit the formulation of a constitution even remotely agreeable to both parties, and never during the period of the mandate was any constitution consistently in full force. This record might be attributed to the conflict between an unbending French colonial policy and an equally uncompromising Syrian nationalism, but after Syria attained its independence in 1945–46, it still experienced a series of coups and counter-coups. Finally, a completely revised consti-

---

◆ MAJID KHADDURI is Professor of Middle East Studies at the School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University.

15: Khadduri S-4 (no date) 1951 MDI Syria [illegible]

642 648 tution was drafted and promulgated in September 1950 with high hopes that it might prove to be the panacea for all of the country's ills.

This process, however, should not be regarded as evidence of inherent insecurity in Syria's political life, but rather as a transitory stage in its constitutional evolution. In it can be seen the gradual ironing out of doubts and conflicts over the nature of the Syrian state, the proper functions of its government, and its relations with the outside world, social and economic as well as political. Syria has freed itself too recently from foreign influence for it to have adjusted fully to both national and international circumstances.

FROM A NATIONAL MONARCHY TO A MANDATORY ADMINISTRATION

642 Amir Faysal, at the head of an Arab army, entered Damascus in October 1918 with the avowed intention of establishing an Arab government. But before he had time to organize a constitutional regime, he was caught up in the larger issue of the peace settlement regarding the whole Arab world. The Syrians, too impatient to wait for the final decisions of the Peace Conference and suspicious of what these decisions would be, called a Syrian Congress representing "Greater Syria" (including Lebanon and Palestine), on the basis of the old Ottoman Electoral Law.[1] This Congress, functioning as both Legislative Assembly and National Convention, considered all matters related to national and foreign policy as well as the drafting of a constitution. It held three main sessions between June 3, 1919, and July 19, 1920. It prepared, during its last session, a draft constitution of 148 articles which, though no formal final vote was taken, had been accepted in principle.[2] The Congress was still considering the second reading when the crisis with the French authorities

---

666 [1] Elections were actually held only in the interior of Syria; the deputies from Lebanon and Palestine, owing to the objection of the French and British military authorities to the elections, were chosen on the basis of petitions signed by voters in support of their candidates. See Philippe David, *Un Gouvernement Arabe à Damas: Le Congrès Syrien* (Paris, 1923), pp. 51–63.

[2] Cf. Philippe David, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

15: Khadduri S-4 (no date) 1951 MD1 Syria MD1

developed and it adjourned on July 19, 1920, never to meet again.[3] 648

The Constitution of 1920 provided for a limited monarchy, a bicameral legislature, and a responsible ministry: provisions for the structure of the central government followed the normal pattern of West-European constitutional monarchies. Syria was to be an indivisible political unit, but its boundaries were left undefined. The Syrian Government was to be an Arab Government, its capital Damascus, and its religion Islam. The Constitution included a Bill of Rights guaranteeing civil liberties and freedom of thought and of religion. The monarchy was to be vested in the Hashimi family, with Faysal the first king. Both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies were to be elected bodies; the deputies by secret ballot in two degrees, and the Senators by the Chamber of Deputies of each province. The administration of the country was to be on a "decentralized" basis: each province was to have its own local administration with a single legislative body called the Chamber of Deputies. The judiciary was to be independent, with a High Court appointed by the King as the supreme judicial organ.[4]

The work of the Syrian Congress was cut short by French 648 action. At a meeting of the San Remo Conference on April 24, 1920, the mandate over Syria and Lebanon was given to France. On July 14 General Gouraud sent an ultimatum to Faysal demanding, *inter alia,* the acceptance of the French mandate and dismissal of the Syrian national army.[5] Faysal's reply, accepting the terms of the ultimatum, was sent a few hours before the expiration of the time limit but did not arrive in time.[6] French troops at once proceeded to establish their authority. Faysal's

---

[3] On the work of the Syrian Congress, see Philippe David, *op. cit.,* Chapters 6 and 8; Amin Sa'id, *Al-thawra al-arabiyyah al-kubra* [*The Great Arab Revolt*] (Cairo, 1934), Vol. II, pp. 18–25, 130–32; Sati' al-Husri, *Yawm Maysalun* [*The Day of Maysalun*] (Beirut, 1947), pp. 245–60.

[4] For text of the Constitution, see Appendix to Philippe David, *op. cit.,* pp. 135–53.

[5] For the text of the ultimatum and the events leading to it, see Sati' al-Husri, *op. cit.,* pp. 96ff.; George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening* (London, 1938), pp. 306–309; J. de V. Loder, *The Truth about Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Syria* (London, 1923), pp. 77–79; Amin Sa'id, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, pp. 167–74.

[6] The Congress was adamant in its opposition, but the Cabinet approved the acceptance of the ultimatum. See Sati' al-Husri, *op. cit.,* pp. 112, 114, 121.

648 meagre forces were shattered at Maysalun (July 24, 1920), and his Arab regime went to pieces.

The elimination of the Arab Government was no difficult problem to France, but its replacement by another proved to be a problem of great complexity since the Syrian nationalists, humiliated by France at Maysalun, now were unprepared to accept anything short of complete independence. They not only refused to cooperate with France in the administration of the mandate, but also began actively to oppose French rule by petitions to the League of Nations, strikes and demonstrations, and eventually armed uprisings. The most serious action was the general Syrian revolt of 1925–27 which came very near to liberating Syria from French rule.

The Syrian revolt taught both France and Syria that a compromise must be sought. In the fall of 1926 the Syrian nationalists submitted to M. Ponsot, the new High Commissioner, a memorandum in which they asked France (1) to "forget the past" and inaugurate a period of cooperation; (2) to hold elections for a Constituent Assembly and promulgate a constitution; (3) to achieve Syrian unity; (4) to organize a national army; (5) to conclude a treaty of alliance between Syria and France which would replace the mandate; (6) to admit Syria to membership in the League of Nations; and (7) to proclaim a general amnesty.[7] On July 26, 1927, M. Ponsot issued a statement in which he conceded certain national demands, such as the preparation of a constitution and eventual transformation of Syria's mandatory status to one of full independence.[8] After further negotiations between M. Ponsot and such leading Syrian nationalists as Hashim al-Atasi and Ibrahim Hananu, it was finally agreed to hold general elections for a Constituent Assembly.

In accordance with Article I of the mandate, France was required to promulgate within three years an organic law for Syria. It had, however, taken no less than six years from the coming into force of the mandate in 1922 to persuade the Syrian nationalists to accept a compromise on a national regime. On February 12, 1928, M. Ponsot appointed Sheikh Taj al-Din al-

---

[7] Amin Sa'id, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 522.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 527–31. For French text, see *Le Temps*, July 31, 1927.

Hasani, Qadi of Damascus and a moderate nationalist, as head 648 of a provisional Government charged with holding general elections and calling a Constituent Assembly. Recent insurgents and political prisoners were released.[9]

THE CONSTITUTION OF 1930

The elections for a Constituent Assembly were held in April 642 1928 and the Assembly met at Damascus on June 9. M. Ponsot, in his inaugural address, declared that once the Assembly had completed its work the time would have come for placing the relations between France and Syria on the basis of a treaty. Sheikh Taj al-Din declared that the Assembly "will have full freedom in the drafting of the Constitution."[10] The Assembly elected Hashim al-Atasi, leader of the Syrian nationalists, as its president; and appointed a drafting committee of 27 members, with Ibrahim Hananu as its chairman and Fawzi al-Ghazzi as rapporteur.

The drafting of the Constitution was primarily the work of a subcommittee of three, Fawzi al-Ghazzi, Fa'iz al-Khuri, and Zaki al-Khattib, under the chairmanship of al-Ghazzi. Studying in detail the constitutions of Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, France, and Belgium, as well as the old Ottoman Constitution of Midhat Pasha, the committee submitted its draft to the Constituent Assembly for discussion on August 2. As finally accepted in principle, the draft stipulated that Syria within its natural boundaries is an indivisible political unit and an independent sovereign state; its form of government is republican; and the religion of its head is Islam. The capital of the state is the city of Damascus. The Constitution provided, likewise, a Bill of Rights, in which the principles of liberty, equality, private property, etc., are all guaranteed

The form of government is parliamentary, but the head of the executive power is the President of the Republic. He is elected by Parliament for a period of five years, but he is not eligible for re-election until the lapse of five years from the

[9] With the exception of 39 persons whom the High Commissioner refused to set free.

[10] *Jalsat al-majlis al-ta'sisi al-suri* [*Proceedings of the Constituent Assembly*] (Damascus, 1928), pp. 1-3.

642 expiration of his term. The President selects the Prime Minister and appoints the ministers upon the latter's recommendation. He sanctions legislation and signs treaties; but treaties and contracts having to do with the security of the State and its financial policy must be approved by Parliament. The President is not responsible, since every decision or decree made by him should be countersigned by the Minister or Ministers concerned, except the decree for appointing a Prime Minister. The President calls, prorogues, and dissolves Parliament upon the recommendation of the Cabinet. The Cabinet is composed of not more than seven members who are individually, as well as jointly, responsible to Parliament. The Ministers need not be members of Parliament, but they can attend and take part in Parliamentary debate.

Parliament is made up of one House (the *Majlis*, or Chamber of Deputies), which is freely elected every four years and sits in two sessions each year — from mid-March to the end of May, and from mid-October to the end of December. The Chamber of Deputies meets in public as well as in secret session and its members enjoy full parliamentary immunity during the session. Every male Syrian who has attained his twentieth year can vote. Parliament can initiate legislation, except perhaps financial bills, and can ask questions regarding the conduct of any Ministry. The Constitution provided also for the establishment of a High Court composed of 15 members to be chosen from Parliament and from among competent judges. This Court is regarded as the supreme judicial organ of the State. Finally, the Constitution might be amended by two-thirds of the members of Parliament or at the request of the President of the Republic in agreement with the Council of Ministers and with the approval of two-thirds of the Parliament.

642
643 The draft constitution may be regarded as expressing the free will of the Syrian people. It ignored entirely France's obligations as a Mandatory Power toward the League of Nations, since the Constituent Assembly regarded Syria both as fully independent and as an indivisible political unity; that is, to include Lebanon and Palestine. The High Commissioner, placed in an impossible position, informed the Assembly that certain articles in the draft called for express reservations on his part, some be-

cause they were in formal contradiction with France's international obligations as a Mandatory Power, others because they could not be given practical effect without a previous agreement with France. The following articles were specifically objected to: 642 148

> *Article 73.* The President exercises the right of pardon. Amnesties can only be granted by law.
>
> *Article 74.* The President concludes and signs treaties; but treaties concerning the security of the state or the public finances, treaties of commerce, and, in general, all treaties which cannot be denounced at the expiration of each year do not become definitive until they have been voted by Parliament.
>
> *Article 75.* The President of the Republic nominates representatives abroad and receives foreign representatives.
>
> *Article 110.* The organization of the future army will form the subject of a special law.
>
> *Article 112.* The President of the Republic may, on the proposal of the Council of Ministers, proclaim a state of siege in disturbed districts, on condition that he inform Parliament immediately. If Parliament is not in session, the President will proceed to summon it without delay.

Further, Article 2, declaring Syria to be both indivisible and fully sovereign, the High Commissioner stated, was in conflict not only with international agreements, but with a "situation of fact and of law" which could not be modified by a unilateral decision.[11] He suggested that the Assembly should separate (*disjonction*) the foregoing six articles. Sheikh Taj al-Din, the Prime Minister, endorsed the request of the High Commissioner and asked the Assembly to delete these articles until the question of relations with France was settled by a treaty of alliance.[12]

The High Commissioner's message and Sheikh Taj al-Din's statement aroused the indignation of the Assembly. The unanimous opinion of the members was that those six articles were the only ones that mattered and that their separation would virtually "leave nothing significant" in the constitution. The Assembly therefore handed the High Commissioner a formal note of rejection. The High Commissioner retorted by adjourning the Assembly for three months; but the Assembly, meeting for the

[11] *Rapport à la Société des Nations sur la situation de la Syrie et du Liban*, p. 16. See also *Proceedings of the Constituent Assembly*, p. 278.

[12] For the Assembly's reactions, see *Proceedings of the Constituent Assembly*, p. 279–308 *passim*.

15: Khadduri S-4 (no date) [illegible] MDl Syria MDl

642 last time on August 10, 1928, passed a resolution empowering its
648 President to negotiate on its behalf with the authorities "for the fulfilment of the country's [national] aspirations." But negotiations between the leading Syrian nationalists and the High Commissioner led to no agreement. Following an exchange of a number of proposals and counter-proposals, the High Commissioner, by a decree issued on February 5, 1929, prorogued the Constituent Assembly *sine die.*[13] It was over a year later, on May 14, 1930, that M. Ponsot, after consultations in Paris, surprised the nationalists by promulgating the Constitution. The text included Article 2 as altered by a previous proposal of his to reduce it to "Syria is an indivisible political unity," but the other articles in question remained unchanged. There appeared also a new provision (Article 116) withholding from application all provisions which infringed upon France's international obligations relative to Syria, or dealt with the maintenance of security or with foreign relations. Such provisions would become applicable only after special agreement between Syria and the French Government. The Nationalists somewhat grudgingly decided to take part in the elections on this basis, but another eighteen months
666 elapsed before M. Ponsot issued orders for holding them. The elections were finally completed on March 30, 1932, and resulted in a victory for the moderates rather than the nationalist elements.

643 When Parliament met on June 7, 1932, there was considerable
642 discussion regarding the election of the President. The Nationalists' candidate, Hashim al-Atasi, could muster only 17 votes; nevertheless they declared their intention of withdrawing from Parliament if the Government insisted upon the election of one of its two candidates: Subhi Barakat or Haqqi al-Azm. A compromise was finally reached by electing Muhammad Ali al-Abid, who was *persona grata* to both groups, on the understanding that he would select Haqqi al-Azm, candidate of the moderates,
642 as Prime Minister. In this way the first republican administration was established by the French in cooperation with the Syrian

---

[13] For these proposals and counter-proposals, see Amin Sa'id, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 550–51. For the French version, see *Rapport à la Société des Nations sur la situation de la Syrie et du Liban*, pp. 20–21.

nationalists. And it was thus that the long period of "provisional" 642 administrations, under the direct control of the French High Commissioner, came to an end.

THE FIRST REPUBLIC

648

Constitutional evolution during the first republic largely involved attempts to formulate treaty relations with France. There were two major efforts in this direction and both were unsuccessful. The main obstacle to successful treaty negotiations in 1933 was France's disregard of Syrian unity.[14] Not only did the French insist that Lebanon be excluded from any future Syrian state — even Jabal Druze and Latakia were to remain semi-independent.[15] The Nationalists also objected to the uncertainty over the abolition of the capitulatory regime, the unlimited rights given to France to maintain forces on Syrian territory, and the creation of a department of common interests for the regulation and control of the economic resources in which France was to have a preponderant position.[16]

A draft treaty was in fact signed on November 16, 1933. Following a brief and inconclusive debate, during which the principal objections raised by the Nationalists were reiterated, the High Commissioner suspended Parliament. Two days later, on November 26, the President of the Syrian Republic withdrew the treaty from Parliament at the High Commissioner's request. Parliament was suspended, and a year later dissolved *sine die*, with the President of the Republic authorized to govern by decrees. In 1934 the Government of Haqqi al-Azm was replaced by that of Sheikh Taj al-Din, who remained in office for about two years. Thus the first attempt at solving relations between France and Syria failed, with consequential impairment of the constitutional organization which had just been set up.

France's second attempt to come to an agreement with the

---

[14] The two Nationalist Cabinet members resigned in protest on April 18. For text of the manifesto giving their reasons, see Amin Sa'id, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 575–76.

[15] For a discussion of the policy of division in Syria compared with the unitary policy of Britain in Iraq, see A. J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs, 1934* (London, 1935), pp. 284–88, 292–96.

[16] For a discussion of the Principal Syrian objections to the treaty and its comparison with the British treaty with Iraq, see George Antonius, "Syria and the French Mandate," *International Affairs*, XIII (1934), pp. 532 ff.

15: Khadduri 6-4 (no date) 1951 MDl Syria MDl

648 Syrian nationalists took place in 1936 when the international situation had become critical in consequence of Mussolini's occupation of Ethiopia. Prompted by his threat to the Eastern Mediterranean, and inspired by Britain's successful move in the same year to appease the Egyptian nationalists, France once more offered to negotiate a treaty which would give Syria full independence. There was at this time the more liberal Popular Front Government in Paris, with Leon Blum as Prime Minister and Yvon Delbos as Foreign Minister, both of whom were more sympathetic toward Syria's national aspirations than their predecessors. The resulting treaty of September 9, 1936, negotiated by a Syrian Nationalist delegation in Paris, provided for the replacement of the Mandate by a Treaty of Alliance with France on the basis of full independence. While Lebanon was to remain outside of Syria, the autonomous districts (Jabal Druze and Latakia) were to join a unitary Syrian state. France was to receive certain rights regarding its military position in the Levant (as in the case of Britain in Iraq) and the two countries were to consult each other in all matters of foreign policy affecting their common interests. The Treaty was to last for 25 years and to come into force, as in the case of Iraq, when Syria was admitted to membership in the League of Nations as an independent state.

[[illegible]] Elections for a new Parliament which was to ratify the Treaty
645 were held in November 1936, and resulted in an overwhelming
648 majority for the Nationalists (Kutla Party). Parliament met on December 21 and elected Hashim al-Atasi, leader of the Kutla, President of the Republic in place of Muhammad Ali al-Abid. Faris al-Khuri, a member of the Kutla, was elected President of the Majlis (Parliament), while Jamil Mardam, another Kutla leader, formed the new Government. All members of the Cabinet were drawn from the Kutla Party. The Treaty with France, regarded as a victory for the Kutla, was approved by Parliament and formally signed by the Government and the High Commissioner on December 22, 1936. But it was never ratified by France owing to criticism leveled against it from military and conservative quarters.[17] In 1938 Jamil Mardam tendered his resignation,

---

[17] For a discussion of France's failure to ratify the treaty, see Charles-André Julien, "French Difficulties in the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs*, XXIV (1946), pp. 327 ff.

which was followed by that of President Hashim al-Atasi, and 645
the French High Commissioner suspended Parliament. Thus 641
the second attempt to come to an understanding with Syria failed.

NATIONAL REGIME: THE SECOND REPUBLIC

The outbreak of World War II brought renewed hopes for 649
independence. Upon France's defeat in 1940 the Syrian Nationalists began to agitate for the immediate formation of a national Government; indeed some of them went so far as to contact secretly the Iraqi nationalists, inviting them to intervene and unite the two countries under the Crown of Iraq. A few urged cooperation with the Axis, but the failure of the Rashid Ali movement in Iraq raised doubts as to the feasibility of achieving Arab national aspirations along this path, and on the whole the moderate elements began to come to the fore.

The joint Anglo-French occupation of Syria and Lebanon in 1941 brought with it a promise of independence. A Provisional Government was appointed, and on September 28, 1941, General Catroux formally proclaimed the independence of Syria. The Constitution, however, was not at once restored, and the Nationalists, led by Shukri al-Quwwatli, revived their activities.
They pledged cooperation with the democratic powers, but de- 642
manded either the immediate restoration of the Majlis of 1936–39 666
or the holding of new elections. Finally, in January 1943 M. Hel- 648
leu, representing General Catroux, French Delegate-General, announced the restoration of the Constitution and initiated arrangements for general elections. These were held on July 26, with the Nationalist Party (al-Kutla) overwhelmingly victorious.

The Majlis met on August 17, 1943, and elected Shukri al-Quwwatli, who had emerged as the unrivaled leader of the Nationalists, President of the Republic, and Faris al-Khuri President of the Majlis. On August 19 the President invited Sa'dullah al-Jabiri to form a new Cabinet, drawn almost wholly from the Kutla, and the Government began immediately afterward to negotiate with the French authorities for the transfer of such controls as the French still exercised.

Syria's struggle against foreign control was thus fully re- 648

648 warded. Not only did it emerge as a sovereign state, but it successfully avoided entering into any such special treaty relations with France as Great Britain had managed to establish with Iraq. The Nationalists' cause was won, the *amour propre* of the Syrian people was gratified. Syria became, of all the Arab states, the first to shape freely its social, cultural, economic, and political affairs.

648 Independence, however, was not coupled with that full po-
642 litical unity which the Nationalists held almost as dear. Not only did Palestine remain completely beyond the bounds of a possible Syrian state: Lebanon has definitely refused to join Syria in any form of union which would destroy or encroach on its sovereign attributes, and Jordan has accepted union only on its own terms. The dismemberment of Syria after World War I has not been repaired by the mere withdrawal of foreign control, and the "Greater Syria" plan, designed to regroup the various fragments into a sort of federal union has raised the complex problem of adjusting the internal differences and vested interests which were partially submerged in the struggle against foreign control. Thus the question of Syrian unity, whether in the form of a Greater Syria, Syro-Iraqi unity, or Fertile Crescent scheme, remains one of the factors influencing Syria's constitutional evolution.

642 Probably far more disrupting to the present Syrian state than the question of unity is the lack of cohesion among the various political forces. Stability in government presupposes the development of constitutional traditions. Frequent changes of regime, a prolonged program of noncooperation with, and at times violence against, foreign rule hardly afforded an opportunity of developing the tradition of responsibility necessary for stable government.

It was not until August 1947, when the term of office of President Quwwatli was due to expire, that a formal amendment of the 1930 Constitution was proposed, and not until November that any action was taken. Article 68, which prohibited the eligibility of the President for re-election was to be amended to permit a second term, but a third term was made possible only after the lapse of a period of five years. Articles 85 and 86, dealing with the procedure and time of the election of the President, were to be carried out by a special decree. Article 89, which 642 specified that the number of ministers was not to exceed 7, was amended to read 12. Finally, Articles 71 and 115, specifying the procedure of electing the first President of the Republic, were deleted.[18]

THE MILITARY COUPS D'ÉTAT

The Quwwatli regime, which could flatter itself on having 669 achieved full independence for Syria, failed to inaugurate the reforms which were so badly needed. The criticism levelled against the Government — that it was corrupt and permitted the aggrandizement of its Ministers — might have been exaggerated, but it will be noted that the Government's "constitutional reform" merely amended those articles which related to the re-election of Quwwatli to the Presidency and to the Cabinet membership, ignoring many other gaps and defects in the constitutional organization of the State. This fact lent substance to the criticism that the Government paid attention only to matters that served the interests of the ruling oligarchy.[19]

Matters came to a head when the Syrian Government (jointly with the other Arab Governments) failed to forestall the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. The Quwwatli regime's attempt to shift the responsibility of defeat to the Army precipitated a reaction. Colonel Husni al-Za'im, secretly encouraged by the opposition parties, raised a military coup d'état on March 30, 1949, which overthrew the Quwwatli regime amidst popular enthusiasm and approval.[20]

Za'im's coup, by eliminating the party which was so avowedly 648 opposed to uniting or even cooperating with the two neighboring 642 Hashimi Kingdoms, at once reopened the question of the future organization of Syria: whether it would be monarchical, by joining a union with Iraq, or maintain a separate republican

---

[18] For text of the Amendment Law, see the Syrian *Official Gazette*, Vol. 30 (March 25, 1948), p. 756. For further details on the Amendment of the Constitution, see Wajih al-Haffar, *Al-dastur wa al-hukm* [*The Constitution and the Government*] (Damascus, 1948), pp. 123–30.

[19] Wajih al-Haffar, *op. cit.*, pp. 133–34; M. Kurd Ali, *Al-Mudhakarat* [*Memoirs*] (Damascus, 1948), Vol. II, p. 530.

[20] For the background of this movement, see Alford Carleton, "The Syrian Coups d'Etat of 1949" *Middle East Journal*, IV (Jan. 1950), pp. 1–11.

15: Khadduri S-4 (no date) 1951 MDl Syria MDl

648 regime. Both Iraq and Jordan, arguing that a union with Syria
648 would strengthen their position against Israel, opened negotiations with Za'im. Pressed by an immediate need to strengthen his position in the forthcoming armistice negotiations with Israel, Za'im offered to conclude an immediate military alliance with a pledge to consider the larger scheme of future cooperation with the Hashimi Kingdoms later on. He refused, however, to commit himself on whether he favored a republican or monarchical regime.[21]

Za'im's move toward negotiation with the Hashimi Kingdoms aroused the fear of the Saudi-Egyptian bloc that a rapprochement would lead to an extension of Hashimi rule to Syria. Egypt and Saudi Arabia therefore countered with promises of recognition and assurances of military and financial aid. This Saudi-Egyptian intervention was so successful that it not only doomed a Syro-Iraqi dual monarchy (with possible extension to Jordan) but inspired Za'im to reach for the highest position of his country — an ambition which sowed the seeds of disagreement between him and his supporters, both civil and military, who now argued that Za'im had betrayed the cause for which they had instigated the coup, namely to rid the country of the Quwwatli regime.

666 In April 1949 Za'im dismissed Parliament and ordered new
[522] elections on the basis of universal suffrage, including women —
642 the first to be thus held in an Arab country. After Za'im's election to the Presidency, preparations were made to promulgate a new Constitution into which liberal principles were to be introduced,
642 especially relating to land reform. This Constitution, though completed, was never promulgated; but a new civil code, bearing the stamp of the Egyptian jurist Sanhuri Pasha (who had already started research along this line at the initiation of the Iraqi Government), was issued. Although based on both European models and the principles of Islamic law, this code materially restricted the authority of the latter. It is regarded as one of the permanent contributions of Za'im's short-lived regime.

---

[21] The relations of the Syrian coups d'état to the schemes of unity with Iraq and Jordan are discussed in detail in a paper by the present writer entitled "The Scheme of Fertile Crescent Unity" contributed to a volume to be published shortly by the Harvard University Press.

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East
LEBANON MEI
SYRIA MDI

S

ness on both sides. In Syria (and to a lesser degree, in Lebanon) L
the possibility of long-term co-operation between the nationalist 648
politicians and the Mandatary was frustrated alike by the attitude
of most French officials and by that of the local urban 669
populations who, though they later signed the 1936 treaty,
desired full self-government.[1] The advent to power in France
of the Front Populaire in 1936 eased the situation: treaties
with Syria and Lebanon were negotiated whereby the Mandate
was to be transformed into an alliance with independent
states, but under which France could still maintain troops
in the Levant. However, the French Parliament was unwilling
to ratify the Syrian treaty under the lengthening shadow of the
impending Second World War, and Syrian indignation was
increased when the need for Turkey's friendship led France in
1939 to cede to Turkey the Sanjaq of Alexandretta, afterwards
renamed Hatay. Leading Syrian politicians refused to cooperate
with the French on these terms, and on the eve of the
outbreak of war the French High Commissioner once again
suspended the Syrian constitution and governed the country
through French and Syrian officials; the same procedure was
applied to Lebanon after the outbreak of war. S

When metropolitan France fell in 1940 the Mandate was L
carried on by the Vichy Government until the latter's acquiescence 648
in the use of the Levant airfields by the German air
force necessitated the intervention of British and Free French
forces in June 1941. After a short but bitter campaign, the
Vichy forces signed an armistice in July 1941. In the struggle
between the Allies and the Axis and between Vichy and de
Gaulle the Syrians and Lebanese took no part, but their independence
had been promised by the Allied Command. On
behalf of the Free French, General Catroux, in a statement on
8 June 1941, proclaimed the end of the Mandate, but in fact the
Free French regarded themselves as trustees for France's
position, seeking to maintain them by installing Syrian and
Lebanese supporters of France in the seats of authority. The
Free French had, however, eventually to yield to the demand
for popular elections, which was supported by the British Government
as soon as the victory at al-Alamain (October 1942) S
had finally removed the threat of Axis invasion from the Middle
East. In Syria the elections of 1943 brought into office the L
National Bloc with Shukri al-Quwatli as President of the Republic 666
and Saadullah Jabri, Jamil Mardam, and Faris al-Khouri 643
as parliamentary leaders. In the Lebanon also nationalists
were successful and the leader of the 'Constitutional Bloc',

---

[1] For details, see A. H. Hourani, *Syria and Lebanon* (London, RIIA, 1946).

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East

Syria ND1
Lebanon ME1

L 666 643

Bishara al-Khouri, became President with the pan-Arab Riyad as-Sulh as Prime Minister; these nationalists were not satisfied with mere titular sovereignty but claimed the reality of independence, and in November 1943 a Free French resort to force against them was reversed only by a British intervention, endorsed by the United States Government. The Free French were thus constrained to transfer most branches of the administration to the Syrian and Lebanese Parliaments, but retained control of the local 'Troupes Spéciales' and obstructed the proper equipping of the Syrian gendarmerie. The French intention was to make this vital concession of authority conditional upon the conclusion of a Franco-Syrian treaty which would give France much the same strategic, economic, and cultural advantages as Britain had retained in Iraq by the already obsolescent Treaty of 1930. S L ● 648 642 721 In March 1945 Syria and Lebanon had been admitted as sovereign states to membership both of the United Nations and of the League of Arab States. The Syrian nationalists were not prepared to subordinate their sovereignty to an imposed alliance with France, and the landing of a contingent of Senegalese troops immediately after VE-day (in disregard of a personal appeal of Churchill to de Gaulle) was regarded in both Syria and Lebanon as clear evidence of a French resort to coercion. Sporadic outbreaks of violence between the Syrian gendarmerie and the local nationalists on the one hand and the French garrison on the other became general, and when, at the end of May 1945, the local French Commander carried out a bombardment of Damascus the British Government ordered their Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, to intervene, by force if necessary, to restore order in a region whose security was vital for British communications in the still-continuing war in the Far East. The crisis accelerated the complete withdrawal of all foreign troops, concerning which the demands of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments were supported by the Security Council; the process was completed in Syria by 15 April 1946 and in Lebanon by the end of the year.

S L 648 642

Between the wars, the French Mandate had allowed political development in Lebanon to produce at least a façade of parliamentary democracy, with arrangements between the Muslim and Christian leaders on the division of political power and prerogatives, and the active commercial and intellectual life of Lebanon made progress with a minimum of government interference. In Syria, however, local separatisms which French policy had encouraged made it very difficult for any Syrian Government to knit the people together from Damascus; the

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 MI Middle East

LEBANON MEI
SYRIA MDI

S. [648 642

foundations for commercial and intellectual progress were less firmly established than in Lebanon, and the Muslim leaders of the political parties were given little opportunity to acquire the technique of government. The root of the trouble was that the French were opposed to self-government and tended to refuse office to nationalist political leaders, except for short, self-defeating periods. But though they failed to foster self-government, the French did much good in both Syria and Lebanon as engineers, doctors, educators, and archaeologists, and performed a valuable service in training at least a cadre of competent civil servants.

With the end of the French Mandate there emerged two sovereign and independent Republics with many mutual and some conflicting interests. For some years the rest of the world failed to distinguish between the two, and it is still possible to find educated persons who suppose that Beirut is the capital of Syria. Syria and Lebanon are, to some extent, mutually dependent or complementary, but they are distinct and their political development will be considered separately.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

(a) SYRIA

S 642 646 643

Under her constitution Syria is a Republic in which the legislative power is in the hands of a Chamber of Deputies numbering 114 members in 1949. The deputies are elected by direct suffrage granted to all men and to women of a certain educational standard. The representation of religious minorities is shown in the table on p. 466 above. The President of the Republic must be a Muslim and is elected for a term of five years by the Parliament; he nominates the Prime Minister who appoints his cabinet ministers. The Parliament is elected for four years but may be dissolved by the President. The constitution was suspended in 1952 by the military dictatorship and a new one on the Presidential model adopted in July 1953.

S 631

Damascus is the seat of government and there are ten provinces, each under a Governor who is assisted by a staff of civil servants representing most of the ministries. The provinces (*muhafaza*) are divided in *qazas*, each under a *qaimaqam*, who is a civil servant under the Ministry of Interior; the *qazas* are divided into *nahiyas* under *mudirs*. Within a *nahiya* may be several villages, each of which is rather loosely under the control of the *mukhtar* who may be elected by the village or appointed by the ministry. The judiciary are independent of the legislature and 1.2-

3. Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East
SYRIA MDI

of September the ban on political parties, which had been in 666 force since the end of 1952, was lifted. The elections resulted in an overwhelming victory for the new party, sponsored by the President. As in 1947, voting was by direct suffrage and in 1953 women voted for the first time; there were five women candidates, who were not, however, elected.

External Problems and Relationships

Syria's relations with Great Britain were good after 1941, 648 although not perhaps as good as might have been expected from Britain's record of support for Syrian independence; the credit for this was soon forgotten when Britain did not take the Arab part in the struggle with Zionism. Both Britain and the United States incurred distrust and dislike for their support of Zionism; Syria is one of the few countries to have refused Point Four aid and there have been incidents, not discouraged by the Syrian Government, in which Americans or American property have been attacked. Of the 'imperial' Western Powers, France was in 1952 the least unpopular, partly in view of her long association with the country and partly because she has supplied Syria with the arms which have not been forthcoming from Britain or the United States; but western Germany was rapidly gaining esteem until the Bonn Government undertook to make reparation to Israel for the massacres of European Jews during the Second World War.

Syria has no affinity with Russia or love of Communism but has enjoyed playing East against West in bargaining for favours. Shishakli has the backing of the nation in his desire for neutrality but, if Syria cannot avoid being involved in any war that may break out between Russia and the West, then Syria naturally prefers to be on the winning side. For Syria, picking the winner is a difficult choice requiring deliberation, and any signs that she may be coming down on the Western side of the fence are only recent.

In the struggle between the Hashimis[1] and the alliance of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Syria usually sided with the latter. This has been due to the devotion of Shukri Kuwatli to the late Ibn Saud and to the fear of Syrian political and military leaders (especially Zaim and Akram Haurani) that they might be submerged by Iraqis and Jordanians in any form of Greater Syria. Under Hinnawi, Syria quarrelled with Egypt and at times there have been signs that she was not prepared blindly to follow Egypt's lead. But, under Shishakli, Syria has tried to keep the peace with both parties; he met Nuri Said in July

---

[1] See above, p. 31.

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East

SYRIA MDI
LEBANON MEI

S
648

1952 and he has obvious affinities with General Neguib of Egypt whom he visited later in the year.

The threat of Zionism is considered very real in Syria and Shishakli has declared that Syria has not given up hope of a revision of the present position. Between March and May 1951 a flare-up over Lake Huleh brought an offer of Iraqi aid to Syria, but hostilities between Syria and Israel were localized and stifled without leading to a general outbreak of war. All Syrians wish Israel ill; fear of Israeli expansion remains and is fostered by the Government.

S
185
186

In internal politics, the most progressive measures which have yet been considered are land reform and the partition of state lands. There is little unrest among the people, who generally want to live their lives without undue government interference. Nationalism of two kinds exists: a nascent patriotism that has for the first time the support of the rulers, and a narrow xenophobia that, while less extreme than in Egypt, is more pronounced in Syria than in Lebanon.

(*b*) LEBANON

L
642
646
643

Lebanon is a republic of which the Chamber of Deputies was till 1953 elected by direct manhood suffrage but in that year women were permitted to vote in the election. By convention, the President of the Republic must be a Christian and is normally a Maronite, the Prime Minister must be a Sunni Muslim and the President of the Chamber a Shii Muslim. The table on p. 466 above shows the division of parliamentary seats between the religious sects; a scrupulous observance of these quotas is evident even in the civil service establishments. The existence of a Christian majority is held to be essential for the survival of Lebanon as a separate state and so, in June 1950, it was found convenient to extend the franchise to Lebanese abroad (of whom the majority are Christian) and to increase the number of deputies from 55 to 77, but in November 1952, under a new electoral law, the number was reduced to 44. The Muslim rate of natural increase is higher than that of the Christians and it is probably for this reason that no census has been taken since. In other ways the constitution and administration are similar to those of Syria already described.

L
665
668

Internal Politics

As in Syria, a European type of political party system has not yet evolved and the struggle has been not only between different cliques of ruling families backed by great commercial wealth, but also between these rich groups on the one hand and

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East

SYRIA MD1
Lebanon ME1

SL
648

Europe and with the United States; but Lebanon has not moved out of step with the Muslim states around her, and she has followed the Arab League line over Palestine and in Egypt's quarrel with Britain and has not agreed to join a Middle East defence organization. She has, however, received arms and military training from Britain and has gladly accepted Point Four aid from the United States.

The main issue of external policy which exercises the Lebanese is the extent of the country's co-operation with Syria and the other Arab states. Some Christians advocate withdrawing the frontiers of the Republic to those of the old Sanjaq of Lebanon together with Beirut; some Muslims want Lebanon to reunite with Syria, and between these extremes discussion still continues. The disagreement with Syria is economic rather than political, but it might gain political significance if Lebanon were to feel isolated to the point at which she felt compelled to come to terms with Israel. At the moment, this is unlikely because Lebanon's friendship with the NATO Powers is good security against possible incursions of enemies or friends.

ARMED FORCES[1]

S
701
652
711
702

Syria has compulsory military service of eighteen months and, since Shishakli's advent, the draft net is being cast over many who previously escaped. The armed services consume each year a growing share of the budget—in 1951–2 they took 40 per cent of the total—and in 1952 there were compulsory collections for the army. The army is grouped in five brigades, each of rather less than 10,000 men, and has tanks, armoured cars, and light, medium, and anti-aircraft artillery and searchlights. Much of the equipment came from France and, though the best then obtainable, is of doubtful serviceableness. However, Colonel Shishakli is determined to give the army good equipment, and a factory for minor armaments exists near Damascus. German instructors are used by the army and air force and are helping to produce light armaments. The air force is part of the army; jet aircraft have been received from Britain and the air force still operates two Dakotas taken over from Syrian airways. The armed gendarmerie had its own esprit and fought well in Palestine; it is now under army control as are the police and the force used for bedouin control.

L
701

The Lebanese army is about a brigade strong and includes a regiment of chasseurs-ski troops. Lebanese officers have had instruction with the British Army and there is an RAF mission with the Lebanese air force who are using jet trainers.

---

[1] In the following sections the two countries are considered together.

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East

LEBANON MEI
SYRIA MDI

5
L
509

near Aleppo, and at Rayaq and there are many emergency landing fields.

S
L
504
439

Sea Ports. Since 1950 Beirut has handled over 2 million tonnage of ships a year; an increase of about a quarter of a million over the pre-war figures. The port has a free zone through which goods are shipped to Syria, Iraq, and Jordan. But the Syrian Government hopes to divert some of the transit trade from Beirut and has, with the assistance of a loan of $6 million from Saudi Arabia, formed a company to develop Latakia in order to handle about a million tons of goods a year (in 1952 431,593 tons were handled). Work on the extension of the port was begun by a Yugoslav firm in April 1953. Tripoli, Sidon, and Banias are ports handling the oil from the pipelines[1] and are little used for other purposes.

S
L
206

Wireless and Telephones. An automatic telephone exchange system covers most of Syria and an automatic exchange is planned for Beirut. Telephone links with Europe and America are available through Beirut and normal cable facilities exist. The Syrian state broadcasting authority has two large transmitters and broadcasts in Arabic, French, English, and Hebrew. Near Beirut there is a station which broadcasts in Arabic, French, and English.

The 'Common Interests'

S'
L
648

Under the Mandate, Syria and Lebanon formed an economic and customs union, the Higher Council of Common Interests, under the direct control of France, which administered customs and excise and controlled concessionary companies, antiquities, and some other services. On 1 January 1944 the control was transferred to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments. The currencies were linked and interchangeable, and both the Syrian and Lebanese pounds were largely backed by French francs based on a rate of 8·83 to the pound sterling (then worth $4·03). In order to maintain a good profit on the exchange brought in by oil companies the Lebanese and Syrian pounds were not devalued in 1949 to follow sterling. Exchange was controlled by one department for both countries and the note issue is in the hands of the French Banque de Syrie et du Liban.

But these links were incompatible with the differences that developed in the economic policies of the two countries when they became independent. Syria, in normal years, has a large exportable surplus of agricultural products and little transit trade, whereas the debtor trade balance of Lebanon is com-

---

[1] See Appendix IV, p. 570 below.

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East

SYRIA MDI
LEBANON MEI

S L 648 pensated partly by her transit trade in goods and partly by her gold and currencies market. Syria wanted a controlled economy with import restrictions, protection of Syrian industries, and independence from French financial policy, but Lebanon's interest was to encourage all trade movements and to rely on franc support: moreover, the two countries could not agree on the division of customs dues. After years of arguments and negotiations the economic partnership was finally terminated on 14 March 1950 and customs posts were established along the common frontier. Since then agreements have been drawn up despite Syrian reluctance, but little has been achieved towards the re-establishment of economic union. It is therefore necessary to consider the economies of the two countries separately.

(*a*) Syria

S

Agriculture

241 Over half but less than three-quarters of the cultivable area of Syria is, in fact, under cultivation. Since 1946 there has been a great increase in the number of pumps and tractors in use (there were 300 tractors in 1948 and 1,342 in 1951) but, as the following table shows, the cultivated area can still be extended.

S L 311

ESTIMATES OF THE USE OF LAND, 1950

	Syria		Lebanon	
	(*sq. miles*)	*Percentage of Total*	(*sq. miles*)	*Percentage of Total*
Cultivable				
Cultivated under rainfall	8,400	12	803	20
Cultivated with irrigation	1,400	2	115	3
Potentially cultivable	14,000	20	700	17
Uncultivable				
Forests	1,600	2	285	7
Pasture	21,000	30	27	1
Desert, mountain and marsh	23,600	34	2,085	52
Total Area:	70,000	100	4,015	100

(Sources: FAO, *Yearbook of Food and Agricultural Statistics, 1952*; UN, Dept. of Economic Affairs, *Review of Economic Conditions in the Middle East, 1951–2.*)

S 241 Some progress in mechanized farming has been made in recent years, but much of the land is tilled as it was 2,000 years ago.
5 423 The predominant form of land tenure is share-cropping by tenants on estates of large and medium size. Small holdings under 25 acres prevail in areas of intensive cultivation, and at present are estimated to constitute only 15 per cent of the total

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East
SYRIAMDI

433 is a modern glass factory for window and mirror glass and for glass containers, with a total estimated annual capacity of over 14,000 tons. This enterprise has suffered from the fact that the sand has to be imported and also from being built before the necessary export market had been secured to keep its three ovens working. Flour mills are plentiful and more are to be constructed; the production of flour is about 400,000 tons a year. In Damascus there are two spaghetti factories and starch is also produced. Tinned fruit, jam, chocolates, and sweets are also produced in Damascus and there are factories for matches (output 45 million boxes in 1952), margarine, soft drinks, and shoes as well as a number of tanneries and workshops in Aleppo and Damascus. A paper mill has recently begun production, with an output of 4 million square metres of corrugated paper and cardboard boxes in 1952.

SYRIAN INDUSTRIAL CAPACITY
(Estimates for 1952)

Number of Factories	*Tons Capacity*
2 Cement	200,000
1 Sugar	10,000
1 Asphalt	variable
9 Edible oil*	12,000
68 Raw cotton ginning	600,000
3 Food preserving (major)	5,000
1 Glass (plate and rolled)	7,500
(containers)	8,000
3 Tobacco	2,000

* Olive and cotton seed.

(Source: *Statistical Abstract of Syria, 1951–2*, Damascus 1952.)

[186] Industry contributes only about a half as much as agriculture to Syria's gross national product, but the spirit of nationalism has led the Government to give special support to local industries although not all are economically sound. As Syria lacks industrial raw materials, industries based on local agricultural produce should be encouraged rather than those which depend on imported raw materials and foreign markets.

Finance

436, 648 The Syrian pound of 100 piastres (reputedly backed as to 60 per cent by gold and foreign currency) is linked to the French franc. Syria is a member of the International Monetary Fund and of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, with a quota of $6½ million. 435 War-time inflation subsided 439 by the end of 1948, but with the Korean boom in primary product prices and the subsequent export surpluses and heavy

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East

LebANON ME1
SYRiA MD1

S

interest per annum. The Syrian private capitalist expects very 426
large returns and the foreign private capitalist requires more
security than is obtainable in the Middle East; thus the develop- 454
ment of Syria must be financed either by the Syrian Govern- S
ment or by an international agency. Syria is one of the few 648
countries to have refused American Point Four aid on principle, 185
but she is a member of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and this organization has been studying some of the development schemes listed below.

1. *Drainage of the Ghab marshes.* Nearly 100,000 acres of land can be irrigated from the excess water of this area to improve agriculture and public health, and plans are well advanced.

2. *Euphrates barrage,* to provide 100,000 kws. of hydro-electric energy for irrigation and industrial needs. With this power it is hoped to irrigate half a million acres.

3. *Yarmuk and Barada rivers.* Hydro-electric schemes to give power to Damascus and the Hauran.[1]

4. *Latakia port.*[2] There have been complications over the award of the tender for this work, and construction had not effectively begun at the beginning of 1953.

5. *Khabur river.* Irrigation scheme for 22,000 acres.

6. Improvement of rail and road communications from Latakia to the hinterland and establishment of a network of all-weather roads in the Jezira.

7. *Rouj marshes.* Drainage to irrigate about 8,700 acres has already commenced.

If agreement can be reached to implement some of these schemes not only will Syria benefit but also the Arab refugees from Palestine may find employment and even homes.

(*b*) LEBANON

L

Much that has been said about Syria also applies to Lebanon 006
and, to avoid repetition, only points peculiar to Lebanon are here outlined.

Agriculture

L

The table on p. 488 above gives the approximate division of 311
the land in cultivable and uncultivable areas and the estimated acreage; the crop and yield of the main agricultural products are given in the following table.

---

[1] An agreement with Jordan was signed on 7 July 1953, but work has not yet begun.

[2] See above, p. 487.

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East

SYRIA MDI
LEBANON ME1

L

figure until February 1953. The cost of living has likewise risen considerably; during the war it rose about sixfold, reaching a peak in 1945. It then decreased steadily until the autumn of 1950, when the Korean boom in raw material prices brought fresh inflationary pressures into Lebanon through her growing commercial and entrepôt trade, and persisted until early 1952. This fresh rise in prices was also caused by the rise in food prices (imported and home grown) following the bad harvest of 1951. Although early in 1953 prices had not resumed their pre-Korean level, they had declined steadily. 511 435

The following figures showing the indices of wholesale prices and the cost of living illustrate the salient movement in prices (1948 = 100).

	1939	*1945*	*1950 July*	*1951 March*	*1951 Dec.*	*1952 May*	*1952 Dec.*	*1953 May*
Wholesale prices	13	134	76	104	96	86	82	79
Cost of living	20	123	84	95	96	94	91	89

(Source: IMF, *International Financial Statistics*, September 1953.)

L

Budgetary expenditure and receipts have also increased considerably, partly resulting from the rise in prices but also from greater commitments. The main increase in expenditure has been for defence, for the Palestine conflict and its aftermath, and for education. The sources of revenue have undergone a marked change: whereas customs provided 60 per cent of the revenue in 1939, they now contribute only 25 per cent, and new indirect taxes on general consumption now provide the major share, about 50 per cent. A measure to increase direct taxation was introduced in September 1951 in the form of a tax on agricultural income based on a 'presumptive' assessment value at progressive rates of tax. As yet its full effect is not known. The budget estimates for 1952 were: expenditure £L94·25 million, and receipts £L94·16 million; further details are given in table 2 on p. 502 below. The 1953 budget was expected to be of the order of £L110 million. b52 b51

S'

L

The division between the Syrian and the Lebanese currencies became effective at the end of January 1948 and this introduced an agio between the two currencies. At first this favoured Lebanon, but in 1951 the Syrian pound was the higher and then, in 1952, the Lebanese pound returned to a premium of from 2·6 per cent to 0·7 per cent. The exchange rates of foreign currencies are given in table 3 on p. 503 below. b48 457

International Trade L

In defiance of the gloomy prophecies of economists, Lebanon contrives to flourish with an adverse trade balance, which in 439

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East

SYRIA MDI
Lebanon MEI

S
L

439 1950–1 amounted to £L215·5 million. Over half this deficit was met from 'invisible' earnings, such as the tourist trade and transportation, and the rest from private donations and capital movements. Indeed, during this period Lebanon's balance of payments showed a small surplus of £L2·7 million.[1] Most of Lebanon's trade (about 40 per cent) is with other Middle Eastern countries, but the foremost country in her trade is the United States (about 20 per cent). Europe and Great Britain are important sources of imports but not such large export markets. Lebanon's main imports are agricultural products, textiles, machinery, and oil, and her chief exports are agricultural products and textiles. The tourist industry is given full encouragement by the Government and, under certain circumstances, tourists' fares to Lebanon are subsidized.

Development

648
312
185
On 24 February 1951 Lebanon signed a Point Four agreement with the United States and the work to be carried out is based on the report to the United Nations in 1949 by Mr Gordon Clapp.[2] Irrigation projects are under way at Akkar, Yamouna, and Qasmiya, and there is a proposal to use the Litani river to irrigate over 12,000 acres of land. In August 1953 the Lebanese Government announced a four-year development plan; the main projects under consideration concern road and hydro-electric power development.

S
L
000

CONCLUSION

The future of Syria and Lebanon will obviously depend to some extent on the past, many aspects of which have not been fully discussed here because the independent political and economic development of the countries began only in 1946. In internal politics events have moved too rapidly for any record to keep pace with them, and there is not yet apparent any stability that would allow one to regard views and information on the political scene as being valid for more than a brief period. As regards their external policy, the two countries have yet to be convinced that there is a community of interest between them and the West. The Western Powers need the use of Syrian and Lebanese territory on which to base a line of defence, but it is not expected that these countries could or should bear a significant part of the burden of defence in men, materials, and money. The Levant wants greater security against Israel than

---

[1] See table 6, p. 505 below.

[2] UN, Conciliation Commission for Palestine (chairman: Gordon Clapp), *Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East* (New York, December 1949).

563 668 but they claim autonomy in the Jazirah or at least the right to live as Kurds, immune from attempts to force them to assimilate.

French Policy

648 563 France's hostility to Arab nationalism led her to show special favour to the minorities in Syria. This policy revealed itself in numerous administrative acts, and in such military acts as the recruitment of special detachments from Circassians, Kurds and other minorities, but it is most clearly shown and has had the most important consequences in regard to the two compact minorities, the Druzes and Alawis.

648 563 631 In 1921 an agreement was concluded between the French authorities and some of the Druze leaders, providing for a national government assisted by French advisers. From this time until 1936 there existed a 'Government of Jebel Druze' independent of Syria and under all-pervasive French control. At first, French policy ran counter to local susceptibilities, and this led to the Druze Revolt of 1925, which became a Syrian national revolt. After the suppression of the revolt, the same system was continued, and was formalized by the Organic Law of 1930. Its effect was to encourage the particularist feeling of the Druzes and to arouse among certain of them a feeling of gratitude to France.

Another autonomous territory was created in the 'Territory' or 'Government' of the Alawis, set up in 1920. It possessed an administrative system similar to that of Jebel Druze, formalized in a similar organic law issued in 1930, and under a still stricter French control. The administration did something to improve the very backward condition of the Alawis and to arouse among them a corporate self-consciousness and a feeling of attachment to France. In general, the district was peaceful after unrest at the beginning; the only disturbances came from the Sunnis and Greek Orthodox, who believed their interests were being neglected and demanded the attachment of the district to Syria.

Nationalism and the Minorities

563 668 The leaders of Arab nationalism in Syria recognize the importance of the minority problem and have made considerable efforts to win the confidence of the minorities. In principle they regard Arab Christians as on a level with Moslems inside the Arab community, once they are willing to accept their obligations as

members of the Arab nation. As for the linguistic minorities, 563
they insist on a certain degree of assimilation, but there is no 668
question of treating them as inferiors because of their racial origins.

They are opposed, however, to the grant of a special regime to minorities, since it would only perpetuate their difference; and even more strongly would they oppose any foreign intervention or influence in support of the minorities. In regard to the compact minorities, while they recognize the need for careful and tactful administration, they believe they are capable of giving such administration, and wholly reject the claims of the autonomists, both because the grant of autonomy would play into the hands of foreign powers eager to intervene, and because, so long as they remained autonomous, the minorities would never learn how to live with their fellow-nationals.

The Treaty of 1936 *and the Minorities*

The autonomy of Jebel Druze and the Alawis was brought to 648
an end by the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936. In December of 563
that year decrees were issued annexing the two Governments to 631
the Syrian Republic as the Provinces of Jebel Druze and Latakia respectively. Certain safeguards were, however, provided for the special position of the two provinces. On the one hand, they were given a special administration and financial regime. On the other, the military convention attached to the Treaty stipulated for the maintenance of French troops in both districts for a period of five years from the coming into force of the Treaty.

At the same time the administration of the Jazirah was placed under the control of the Government of Damascus; it had never been formally autonomous but in practice had been under direct French administration since the establishment of civil government there.

In each of these three districts there was a group which wel- 648
comed the union with Syria, and others who thought it in their 563
interest to side with the nationalists who seemed to be the rising 668
power. Others again did not object to incorporation in Syria, so long as the special position of the provinces was respected and they were fairly treated in such matters as government appointments. There were some, however, who desired to return to complete autonomy under French protection. From 1937

Syria MD1

648
563
668

to 1939 this last group grew stronger, and more or less brought administration to a standstill. There were a number of reasons for this. The Government was hasty and tactless; some of its supporters were intolerant. The fears and suspicions of the minorities were too strong to be overcome in a few months, and there can be no doubt that they were played upon by some of the French officials who refused to accept the change of policy laid down in the Treaty of 1936.

In 1937 and again in 1939, Jebel Druze was disturbed. In Latakia discontent grew gradually but did not become serious until the rising of a section of the Alawis led by Suleiman Murshid, a self-made notable and self-styled god. In 1937 a section of the Kurds and of the Christians of the Jazirah caused disturbances. Their case was strengthened by the support of Cardinal Tappouni, the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch. Again in 1939, there were manifestations on a large scale.

Meanwhile, relations between the French Government and the nationalists had been growing worse, owing to the reluctance of the former to secure the ratification of the Treaty. By 1939, France had reversed the policy inaugurated in 1936. In July 1939, the Constitution was suspended. Almost simultaneously decrees were issued restoring the autonomy of the Jebel Druze and the Alawis. At the same time the Jazirah was placed once more under direct French rule; but by December 1940, matters had returned to normal and, once more, the authority of the Syrian Government was imposed in the Jazirah.

It was not only the compact minorities which had been restless during these years. The scattered minorities also had been apprehensive of nationalist policy towards them. They had not been persecuted on any large scale, and officially the Government had frequently declared its desire to treat all citizens equally; but there had been enough acts of discrimination to appear to justify the pre-conceived fears of the minorities. It was partly to allay these fears that the Syrian Government concluded supplementary agreements with the French Government in 1937 and 1938, containing among other things guarantees for the position of communities and individuals.

The difficulties of the situation must not, however, be exaggerated. Not all minorities were equally hostile to nationalism. Those which were most hostile were the Catholics, who had profited most from French rule; others, like the Greek Orthodox

and a section of the Armenians, were able to maintain good 648
relations with the Government. In general, what troubles 563
occurred were no more than were inevitable in a period of 668
transition.

Developments since 1941

In September 1941, General Catroux proclaimed the inde- 648
pendence of Syria. His proclamation contained the following statement about minorities:

> Free France considers that the State of Syria forms politically and territorially an indivisible unity, of which the integrity ought to be preserved against any dismemberment. In consequence she will look with favour upon the strengthening of the political, cultural, and economic links which unite the different portions of Syria. To this end, the Delegate-General and Plenipotentiary of Free France will revise the texts defining the particular status formerly accorded to certain regions, in such a way that, while the administrative and financial autonomy to which they show themselves firmly attached is preserved, they shall be politically subordinated to the Syrian central power. Thus the principle of Syrian unity and the particular aspirations of these regions will be reconciled.
>
> It remains understood, moreover, that the guarantees of public right set out in the organic statutes in favour of individuals and of communities will be maintained and given full effect.[1]

In accordance with these principles, the two autonomous 631
territories were re-attached to the rest of Syria. Thus, the first 563
Government formed after the proclamation contained a Druze and an Alawi Minister; and in February 1942, the two provinces were once more formally annexed to Syria, with provisions for a special administrative and financial regime. In September 1944 the Administrative Council of Jebel Druze voted unanimously for the abrogation of its special regime and complete incorporation in the Syrian State.

In the summer of 1943, elections were held and subsequently 642
a nationalist government took office. As formerly, the Chamber contained representatives of the minorities and the Cabinet a
Christian minister. The Government made clear its intention 641
of treating all members of the community on a footing of complete 563

---

[1] General Catroux's Proclamation of Syrian Independence, September 28, 1941. *Journal Officiel de la France Libre* (London), Première année, No. 13, December 9, 1941.

641 563 equality but, at the same time, of making its authority respected by all alike. In spite of these declarations, however, there were a series of petty incidents in 1944 which aroused the fears of some of the minorities: for example, local disorders and alleged injustices in government appointments. In some parts of the country, moreover, the Government had difficulty in imposing its authority. This was particularly true of the Alawi district, where Suleiman Murshid and his associates caused trouble; the Jazirah also was not quiet. There were a number of reasons for these difficulties: it was inevitable that the minorities should still retain their old fears of Sunni domination; it was no less natural that in a time of administrative changes certain local officials should abuse their powers and indulge their prejudices; it was unavoidable that families and groups should be disappointed when official appointments were made, and should blame the Government's choice on religious prejudice. None of these, 648 563 however, was the most important reason. That was to be found in the strained state of relations between the French and the nationalists in Syria. So long as France continued to deny the claim of the nationalists to full independence, they could not help feeling a certain resentment against the minorities who had so often been used as tools of French policy.

In 1945, after the Franco-Syrian crisis in the course of which Damascus was bombarded, Franco-Syrian political relations were at last regulated, and agreement was reached for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Syrian soil. The withdrawal took place in 1946, and thus the essential condition for the establishment of normal relations between majority and minorities was fulfilled.

29:Dunn S-4 (1952)1952 MI Middle East
Syria MDI

COTTON IN SYRIA

is a very high figure, representing more than 50 per cent of the total land 241
under cultivation, and the United States Agricultural Attache is inclined to 312
believe that the Ministry's figures include the total area served by irrigation systems, whether or not all the land receives water each year.

There are no large-scale irrigation works in Syria. State and local 312
governments have constructed and now maintain a number of small dams, 653
diversions, and canals, but the total area served by these public works in 1951 was only 100,000 acres. Several other projects, scheduled for completion within the next three or four years, will increase the area under public works another 100,000 acres. Most of these projects are being financed by the federal government out of its regular budget.

By far the largest area is served by small diversions operated by individuals. 312 The next largest and fastest growing area under irrigation is that served by mechanical pumps. The number of pumps doubled from 1950 to 1951 and the area irrigated increased three times. These pumps are used mostly for drawing water from streams.

In the absence of detailed surveys, accurate estimates as to how much water might be available from all sources are impossible to obtain. Draining the Ghab Swamps on the Orontes River west of Aleppo to bring another 100,000 acres into cultivation is now being studied by a Dutch engineering firm, and a large dam on the Euphrates River to impound water in sufficient volume to serve an additional 750,000 acres is under consideration. Several million acres of land along the Euphrates River probably are suitable for cultivation from the standpoint of soil if water becomes available. At the present time irrigation along the Euphrates is limited to the low-lying land between the banks of the river. Through the centuries the river has cut a bed from a half mile to as much as 10 miles wide through the plain, which is now 30 to 50 feet above the water level. It has proved too expensive for individuals to use pumps to pull the water from the river for irrigation.

The same general condition prevails on the main tributary of the Euphrates, the Kabur. Numerous pumps have been installed along the Kabur, and a gravity system in the north, operated by a small dam and canals, is being extended under a current program. It is possible the water would be adequate to extend the gravity system slightly in the southern reaches of the river.

Water might be diverted also from the Tigris River which runs across the northeastern border of Syria. Extensive use of water from any of these international rivers, however, very likely would involve agreements with neighboring countries. Additional water might be provided also by the other rivers in the country. All of these proposals involve tremendously expensive projects beyond the means of the country to finance without outside help.

CAPITAL AND CREDIT

The highly nationalistic attitude of the Syrians damages the chances of 471
private industry's securing a foreign loan. A recent law requiring all foreign
operations to have Syrian managers and at least 50 per cent Syrian capital, 186
together with the questionable security, makes sizable foreign investments 648
unlikely. Under these conditions any foreign loans probably will be made to the government. The Syrian Government has made an obvious point of not obligating itself to another foreign power, and it is unlikely it will accept

29:Dunn S-4 (1952)1952 MI Middle East .

Syria MDI

471 a loan directly from another government. This attitude is illustrated clearly
186 in the refusal of Syria to sign an agreement with Point Four.

648 A loan from an international body is another matter, and the country is seeking a loan of several million dollars from the International Bank for development of transportation, particularly roads in the Jezira, and port facilities at Latakia.

454 Without a large-scale public works program, only minor improvements can be made to the existing system. However, opportunities exist for in-
241 creasing production through private investment.

The good crops of 1950, sold at exceptionally high prices, resulted in high profits and the accumulation of considerable capital. The hope of continued high profits caused much of this capital to be re-invested in equipment and farm improvements. The same incentive also brought out new capital which never before had been invested in agriculture. Judging from the number of tractors, combines and accessories, and irrigation pumps purchased during 1950 and 1951, the investment in agricultural equipment in these two years exceeded the total up to that time. Unprecedented expenditures for general farm improvements also were made, an exceptional step in a country without a history of investment in agricultural development beyond the acquisition of land and a few simple facilities. The capital base has been small. Production has about equaled consumption. There has been little surplus for savings. The few families with capital have used their funds in other ways, seldom for agriculture. But the experience of 1951 was not encouraging for long-continued investment in agricultural development. These investments were costly, many farmers paying double the United States prices for equip-

361
427
211

These farmers are typical of those in northern Syria. All the tenants of one landlord usually live in villages like this one near Aleppo. Villages vary in size from a few hundred to several thousand depending on the size of the farm.

29:Dunn S-4 (1952)1952 MI Middle East
Syria MD1

654 training schools have been placed under the department and their budget increased some four to five times. Staffs of the research institutions have been expanded and the over-all program coordinated. It should be emphasized that these programs still are in the early stages of development.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

● 648 242 Syria is not eligible for Mutual Security aid and so far has not seen fit to accept Point Four assistance. The United Nations, being international in character, is permitted to operate, and the Food and Agriculture Organization has a fairly large staff and an extensive program concentrated in the fields of cotton, home economics, veterinary science, farm machinery maintenance, and forestry. An FAO pathologist is working on problems of cotton diseases and insect controls.

A special FAO cotton mission, under the direction of an outstanding cotton technician, Dr. M. A. El Kilany Bey, former Under Secretary of State of the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture, last year made a detailed study of cotton production and marketing problems and submitted a list of specific recommendations to the government. The recommendations called for rigid controls over production by areas; sterilization and controlled distribution of planting seed; an improved insect control program, including mandatory use of insecticides and destruction of stalks; tighter control over ginning and distribution of the products; and improved classification. Most of these recommendations have been adopted.

One of the most effective foreign organizations working in the country is the Near East Foundation, a small philanthropic agency with headquarters

Roller gins like these in Aleppo, Syria, are rapidly being replaced by the faster and more efficient saw gins. However, total capacity of all roller gins in Syria is still double that of the saw gins.

29:Dunn S-4 (1952)1952 MI Middle East
Syria MDI

in New York. The Foundation is engaged in research and education along 418 ● the same general lines as in Iran, Lebanon, and Greece. With a small budget 242 the Foundation has in its research learned many practical and useful ways of improving agricultural production. The methods they have devised in teaching simple home economics, such as canning, and principles of sanitation are exemplary. As a result, many villages in the area in which the Foundation operates have bought sewing machines and pressure cookers either with their own funds or with money given by the landlords. Particularly impressive is the practical nature of the work and the absence of a large administrative budget.

COTTON

Statistics on the area planted to cotton are also of questionable accuracy. 248 For what they are worth, the figures show that cotton acreage declined almost 50 per cent from a prewar average of about 85,000 acres. It increased to about 60,000 acres during the five years after the war, and, with high prices, expanded further to almost 200,000 acres in 1950-51 and to about 450,000 acres in 1951-52. In 1952-53 it is expected acreage will be down, possibly just above the 1950-51 level.

Table 24

SYRIA: Statistics on Cotton Production and Distribution
Specified Years, 1920-1951

Year Beginning August 1	Acreage	Yield per Acre	Production	Consumption	Exports
	Acres	Pounds	Bales		
Average 1920-24	NA	NA	5,700	NA	NA
Average 1925-29	50,025	82	9,951	NA	NA
Average 1930-34	42,356	116	10,199	NA	NA
Average 1935-39	84,477	157	28,022	NA	NA
Average 1940-44	47,445	152	15,360	NA	NA
Average 1945-49	58,876	234	31,111	23,100[1]	NA
1950	192,442	406	163,039	21,700	155,000
1951	450,000	220	206,461	22,400	120,000[2]

[1] Average for 1947-49.

[2] Exports September 1, 1951, through May 15, 1952.

Source: *Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, United States Department of Agriculture.*

YIELDS

Average yield figures are even more conjectural than acreage. The government's records indicate that the average yield increased from about 160 pounds in 1935-39 to better than half a bale in 1944-49 and to more than 400 pounds per acre in 1949-50 and 1950-51. Because of the large number of inexperienced cultivators, cold weather in the spring, lack of moisture and inadequate irrigation, and heavy insect damage, the 1951-52 yields were poor everywhere and the national average dropped to about 220 pounds per acre. Farmers in the new mechanized area of the Jezira reported losing 90 per cent of their crop. There is no doubt that cotton yields have been erratic.

VARIETIES

~~248~~

Lone Star was the only American Upland variety planted until Coker ~~242~~ and Acala seeds were imported in recent years. These have produced good

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 Ml Middle East

LEBANON MEI

Syria MDI

~~323.~~

AN ACCORD BRINGING ABOUT THE END OF HOSTILITIES IN SYRIA AND LEBANON[1]

ANGLO-FRENCH AGREEMENT ON SYRIA

JULY 15, 1941

L 648

S 648

I. General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, G.B.E., K.C.B., D.S.O., commander in chief of the Allied forces in Palestine and Syria, acting in the name of the commander in chief of the Middle East for the first part; and

General de Verdilhac, Legion of Honor, assistant to the commander in chief of the troops of the Levant, acting in the name of the French high command for the second part, have reached an agreement bringing about the end of hostilities in Syria and Lebanon, by which the hostilities stopped July 11, 1941, at 9:01 p.m. (Greenwich mean time).

II. The Allied forces will occupy the Syrian and Lebanon territories. The French forces will be concentrated in certain zones fixed by the committee composed of representatives of the two parties. This concentration should be achieved by Tuesday, July 15, 1941, at the noon hour, at which the Allied forces will move toward the occupation of certain strategic points.

Until their repatriation the French troops will remain with reduced officer personnel under the French command, which will see after their supply and with that purpose keep the existing quartermaster stocks. Special dispositions are foreseen for the Jebel el Druz, where for reasons of security French troops will stay in their garrisons until relieved by British troops.

III. In order to insure the public security, the occupation of the principal Syrian and Lebanese localities will be carried out according to a program which will permit the immediate replacement of the French forces by the occupying forces.

IV. Sea and land mine fields will be disclosed to the occupying authorities.

---

[1] English text in New York *Herald Tribune*, July 16, 1941.

57: Davis S-4 (no date)1953 Ml Middle East

LEBANON MEI

Syria MDI

L 648

S 648

V. All the honors of war will be rendered the French forces. These will withdraw to the concentration zones which have been designated, with all arms, including cannons, machine guns, tanks, automatic rifles and all their ammunition. All necessary measures will be taken by the French command to avoid arms and munitions being left abandoned on the field of battle wherever they are. The French military authorities will give all necessary assistance toward retrieving arms which may be found in the hands of the population.

VI. In consideration of the honors of war accorded the French forces, officers and noncommissioned officers and French soldiers are authorized to keep their individual arms (rifles or carbines, revolvers, bayonets, swords or sabers). Soldiers are to keep no munitions. In each unit, for security reasons, a reduced amount of munitions are to be left. The police will keep its arms and a reduced quantity of munitions. All other war material, including guns of the coastal batteries, anti-aircraft batteries, as well as military vehicles, are to be stocked under control of the British authorities. These will proceed with inspection of the material and will have the right to take over material which is necessary for them. The rest is to be destroyed by the French authorities under the control of the British authorities.

VII. Prisoners of the Allied forces are to be immediately freed, including those who have been transferred to France. As far as the latter are concerned, the British authorities reserve the right to hold in captivity an equal number of French officers as far as possible of the same grade until the prisoners transferred to France have been liberated.

French prisoners are to be liberated when all Syrian and Lebanon territory will have been occupied and the clauses of the present accord fully executed. They are to be given an opportunity to rejoin their units with a view toward their repatriation.

VIII. The alternative of joining the Allied cause or being repatriated is to be left to the free choice of each individual, civilian as well as military. Civilians who do not join the Allied cause may on their demand be permitted by the British authorities to remain in the Levant.

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 Ml Middle East
LEBANON ME1
Syria MD1

L
648
S
648

IX. Administrative officials and officials of the technical services and officers of special services are to remain in office a necessary amount of time to assure continuity of the administration of the country until they are able to be replaced. They then are to be repatriated if they express the desire. They can be dismissed for a reprehensible attitude or insufficient service.

X. British authorities agree that the repatriation of French troops is to be carried out by French sea transports, provided this repatriation concerns only persons who opted for repatriation. British authorities have the right to control repatriation operations.

XI. Monetary possessions of repatriated French citizens are to be transferred according to methods to be established.

Those concerned are to receive payment no less favorable than that applied to British subjects who recently left the Levant.

XII. French institutions (hospitals, schools, religious missions, etc.) are assured that their rights will be respected.

XIII. Administrations of public services and public utilities, including railroads, municipal transportation, electric installations and water systems, will be kept in functioning condition with their personnel and turned over intact.

XIV. All means of telephone, telegraph and radio telegraphic communications, including submarine cable, to be turned over intact to the occupying authorities. The use of telegraph connections with France is to be assured for the French command on the same conditions as for other users.

XV. All port installations, naval establishments and all ships, including British vessels in Syrian and Lebanese territorial waters, are to be turned over intact to the occupying authorities.

XVI. All airplanes, all equipment and all aeronautic installations in Syrian and Lebanese territory to be turned over intact immediately after signature of the present convention.

The British are to be given an opportunity to utilize all airdromes and landing fields existing in Syria and Lebanon.

XVII. Stocks of fuel oil are to be delivered intact. Necessary quantities for military transportation are to be placed at the disposition of the French command.

XVIII. Money and other means of payment in circulation or

57: Davis S-4 (no date)1953 Ml Middle East

LEBANON MEI

Syria MDI

reserve in banking establishments and public funds are not to be destroyed or diverted. L 648

S 648

XIX. British military authorities reserve the right to take in their service special troops of the Levant as fast as they are released by the French authorities. The arms of these troops must be turned over to the British authorities.

XX. The British authorities are not to impose any sanctions against Syrian and Lebanese natives who took part in the recent hostilities either as soldiers or administrators.

XXI. The execution of the present accord is to be regulated and controlled by "a control commission," which will have headquarters at Beirut and which will be composed of five members. Three of these members, including the president, are to be designated by the British authorities, the other two by the French authorities.

This commission may name as many subcommissions and take advice from as many experts as necessary.

XXII. The present accord is done in two languages (French and English). In case of disagreement the English text is to be followed.

57: Davis S-4 (no date)1953 Ml Middle East
SYRIA MDI

445

FRANCO-TURKISH ARRANGEMENT OF JUNE 23, 1939 ARRANGEMENT FOR THE FINAL SETTLEMENT OF TERRITORIAL QUESTIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND SYRIA[1]

PREAMBLE

The President of the French Republic and the President of the Turkish Republic, 648

Having regard to the provisions set forth in Article 7 of the Agreement of October 20th, 1921, and in the letter supplementary to Articles 7 and 8 of that Agreement,

Being convinced of the importance attaching to a territorial settlement which, by finally determining the frontier between Syria and Turkey, will have the effect of removing all possibility of misunderstanding between the two countries and, thereby, of placing their mutual relations on a sound basis,

Have appointed as their plenipotentiaries: . . .

Who, having exchanged their powers and found them in good and due form, have agreed upon the following articles:

Art. 1. France, in so far as she is concerned, consents to the line described in the Protocols of May 30th, 1926, June 22nd, 1929, and May 3rd, 1930, being rectified:

(a) From the point where the Kara-Sou crosses the present frontier as far as the boundary pillar bearing the number 230, so as to

---

[1] English text in League of Nations, *Official Journal*, July-August, 1939, pp. 356-361. For references to earlier agreements, protocols, etc., cf. *Organic Regulations of the Sanjak of Alexandretta* (C.352.1930.VI) (C.P.M. 1075) (*Series of League of Nations Publications*, VI.A. Mandates.1930.VI.A.3), pp. 24-25; *Questions of Alexandretta and Antioch* (C.538.M.348.1936) (*Series of League of Nations Publications*. General. 1936.8); "Settlement of Question of Alexandretta and Antioch," *Monthly Summary of the League of Nations*, January, 1937, pp. 2-4; *Collection of Texts Concerning the Sanjak of Alexandretta* (C.282.M.183.1937); Franco-Turkish Agreement, Oct. 20, 1921 (League of Nations *Treaty Series*, vol. 54 no. 1284, p. 177; Franco-Turkish Convention, May 30, 1926, with protocols (*ibid.*, no. 1285, p. 197; Protocol of June 22, 1929. G. F. von Martens, *Nouveau recueil général de traités* . . . 3rd ser., vol. 30, p. 92); Protocol of May 3, 1930 (France, Haut Commissariat en Syrie et au Liban, *Les Actes diplomatiques en vigueur*. Beyrouth, 1935, p. 244).—Ed.

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 MI Middle East

SYRIA MDI

648 coincide with the boundary of which the delimitation on the ground is recorded in the Protocol signed at Antioch on May 19th, 1939, it being understood that the village of Guemid between pillars 17 and 20 will be entirely allotted to Turkey and that from pillar No. 224 the line will run direct to pillar No. 230, leaving in Turkish territory the road from Yeni Chéhir to Antioch;

(b) And from the pillar bearing the number 419 following a line running in a north-easterly direction to a point about 1,200 metres south-west of Askorane, and from that point, passing to the east of Askorane and Godja-Qairaq, it will run northwards to a point situated about one kilometre north-east of Godja-Qairaq.

From that point the line will run in a westerly direction to a point situated about one kilometre north of the ruined castle and will then run to the south-west as far as point 1010 (west of the ruined castle); it will then follow in a south-westerly direction the bottom of the ravine to the north of Bachourte which opens out towards the stream of Kara-Dourane and will then follow that stream as far as the sea.

In the three sectors specified above, the Commission which completed its operations on May 19th, 1939, will be given the duty of determining the new line on the ground.

The territories situated beyond the line thus described will be evacuated by the French forces by July 23rd, 1939, at latest, by which date there will also be completed the transference by the French authorities of the powers remaining in their hands.

Art. 2. Citizens of the Sanjak of Alexandretta established in the territories referred to in the last paragraph of Article 1 will *ipso facto* acquire Turkish nationality.

Art. 3. Persons over 18 years of age who under Article 2 acquire Turkish nationality shall be entitled, within a period of six months from the coming into force of the present Arrangement, to opt for Syrian or Lebanese nationality.

Persons desiring to exercise the right provided for above shall deliver a declaration to that effect to the administrative authority of their place of residence. An acknowledgment shall be issued to them. The list of optants shall be communicated at as frequent intervals as possible to the French consular authority.

57: Davis S-4 (no date)1953 Ml Middle East
SYRIA MDI

Art. 4. Persons who have exercised the right to opt in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 must, within the succeeding eighteen months, transfer their place of residence out of Turkey.

They must liquidate their immovable property and they will be entitled to dispose of or take with them their movable property of every description and also their live-stock.

The proceeds of the liquidation referred to above shall be paid into a blocked account in the Central Bank of the Turkish Republic at Alexandretta and shall, in regard to the method of their transfer, be the subject of a special Arrangement between the French and Turkish Governments.

Any sums in currencies other than Turkish currency that may be in the possession of the persons referred to in the first paragraph of the present article may be exported in accordance with the arrangements provided for in the *procès-verbal* annexed to the present Arrangement.

Art. 5. For the purposes of the provisions embodied in Articles 2, 3 and 4, the status of a married woman will be governed by that of her husband, and the status of children under 18 years of age by that of their parents.

Art. 6. The French Government shall have the right to appoint a custodian for the maintenance and protection of the military cemetery of Alexandretta, which is situated on land belonging to the French State and which shall be maintained in its present condition.

Art. 7. Turkey recognises as constituting the definitive boundary of her territory the line described in the Convention of May 30th, 1926, the Protocol of June 22nd, 1929, and the Protocol of May 3rd, 1930, as rectified in virtue of the present Arrangement.

Accordingly, Turkey condemns any action of such a kind as to infringe the territorial integrity or endanger or compromise the internal tranquillity of Syria or such as might conduce to the same ends, and she undertakes to prohibit and, should occasion arise, to suppress and punish in her territory any action of this nature.

Art. 8. No provision of earlier treaties and agreements may be interpreted as being contrary to the undertakings embodied in Article 7.

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 Ml Middle East
SYRIA MDI

648

Art. 9. The High Contracting Parties shall, in the case of France in Syrian territory and in the case of Turkey in her own territory, take all measures of such a kind as to prevent the preparation or perpetration of acts directed against the respective security or regime of the two neighboring countries.

Art. 10. With a view to making possible the conclusion of a new agreement, the Convention of Friendship and Good Neighbourly Relations, dated May 30th, 1926, and the agreements supplementary thereto shall continue in force until March 15th, 1940.

The provisions of the above-mentioned instruments shall be valid in respect of the whole of the Turkish-Syrian frontier as determined by the Protocols of May 30th, 1926, June 22nd, 1929, and May 3rd, 1930, and by the rectification provided for in the present Arrangement.

It is, however, understood that the provisions relating to rights of pasturage and change of pasture are deemed to be annulled.

Art. 11. The present Arrangement shall be ratified and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged at Paris as soon as possible and at latest by July 22nd, 1939. It shall enter into force on the date on which the exchange of ratifications takes place.[1]

---

[1] This Arrangement is followed by a Protocol, two Annexes, a *procès-verbal*, and an exchange of letters.—Ed.

57: Davis S-4 (no date)1953 MI Middle East
SYRIA MDI

449

NOTE ON TREATIES

1. Syria is a party to the Pact of the Arab League[1] and to the 648 Cultural Treaty of the Arab League.[2]

2. Armistice agreement between Israel and Syria.[3]

3. Syria is an original member of the United Nations. It deposited its ratification on October 19, 1945.

---

[1] See below, p. 527.

[2] See below, p. 534.

[3] See the Note on Armistice Agreements, p. 367.

57: Davis S-4 (no date)1953 Ml Middle East

Lebanon ME1
Syria MD1 283

MANDATE FOR SYRIA AND THE LEBANON[1]

JULY 24, 1922

L
S.
648

The Council of the League of Nations:

Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have agreed that the territory of Syria and Lebanon, which formerly belonged to the Turkish

---

[1] English text in League of Nations, *Mandate for Syria and the Lebanon*, July 24, 1922, Geneva, 1922 (C. 528.M.313.1922.VI).

The Mandate for Syria and the Lebanon was not formally abrogated. However, General Catroux, on entering Syria on June 8, 1941, proclaimed, in the name of Free France and her Chief, General de Gaulle, that he came "to end the régime of the mandate" and that "your status of independence and sovereignty will be guaranteed by a treaty in which our mutual relations will be defined." (Proclamation printed below, pp. 320-321.) In a declaration of support, Sir Miles Lampson, British Ambassador in Cairo, declared himself "authorized by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to declare that they support and associate themselves, with the assurance of independence given by General Catroux on behalf of General de Gaulle to Syria and Lebanon."

On September 27, 1941, General Catroux issued a "Déclaration française portant proclamation de l'indépendance de la Syrie" (*Journal Officiel de la République Syrienne*, no. 40 bis, October 14, 1941, pp. 8-9); a similar proclamation announcing Lebanese independence was issued on November 26, 1941. Both declarations conclude by saying that "it is necessary that a final settlement be substituted for these stipulations as quickly as possible by a Franco-Syrian (Franco-Lebanese) treaty which will guarantee definitively the independence of the country."

In pursuance of these proclamations, a convention was concluded December 22, 1943, between Free France and Syria and the Lebanon referring to the transfer of the Services of the "Intérêts Communs" to both States (*Bulletin Officiel des Actes Administratifs de la Délégation*, no. 1, of February 15, 1944, p. 3); on January 3, 1944, a Protocol was published referring to the transfer of the General Customs Administration to both States (*ibid.*). No treaty defining the mutual relations between France and Syria and the Lebanon and guaranteeing the independence of both States was concluded. Both, however, were invited to the United Nations Conference in San Francisco, have ratified the Charter, and thus have become members of the United Nations.

The former mandatory powers were bound by agreements with the League of Nations, agreements which are considered by the Secretary General of the United Nations as suspended owing to the dissolution of the League. (See the remark on "International Mandates" in the United Nations document, "Study of the legal validity of the undertakings concerning minorities," *Economic and Social Council*, General E/CN 4/367, April 7, 1950, p. 15). The trusteeship system of the United Nations, on the other hand, applicable under the United Nations Charter to "Territories now held under mandate" (art. 77 a) was not applicable to Syria and Lebanon under art. 78: "The trusteeship system shall not apply to territories which have become members of the United Nations, relationship among which shall be based on respect for the principle of sovereign equality." The independence of Syria and Lebanon has thus been implicitly or explicitly recognized by all members of the United Nations as well as the nonmember states.

(*Continued on next page.*)

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 Ml Middle East
Lebanon MEI
Syria MDI
L
S
648

Empire shall, within such boundaries as may be fixed by the said Powers, be entrusted to a Mandatory charged with the duty of rendering administrative advice and assistance to the population, in accordance with the provisions of Article 22 (paragraph 4) of the Covenant of the League of Nations; and

Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have decided that the mandate for the territory referred to above should be conferred on the Government of the French Republic, which has accepted it;[1] and

Whereas the terms of this mandate, which are defined in the articles below, have also been accepted by the Government of the French Republic and submitted to the Council of the League for approval; and

Whereas the Government of the French Republic has undertaken to exercise this mandate on behalf of the League of Nations, in conformity with the following provisions; and

Whereas by the afore-mentioned Article 22 (paragraph 8), it is provided that the degree of authority, control or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory, not having been previously agreed upon by the Members of the League, shall be explicitly defined by the Council of the League of Nations;

Confirming the said mandate, defines its terms as follows:

Art. 1. The Mandatory shall frame, within a period of three years from the coming into force of this mandate, an organic law for Syria and the Lebanon.

This organic law shall be framed in agreement with the native authorities and shall take into account the rights, interests, and wishes of all the population inhabiting the said territory. The Mandatory

---

With regard to the French and British troops which were still on Syrian and Lebanese soil an agreement was reached on December 13, 1945, by the governments of France and Great Britain providing for the evacuation of these troops from Syria and the Lebanon. On February 5, 1946, the Syrian and Lebanese delegations to the United Nations brought to the attention of the United Nations the fact that French and British troops were still being maintained in Syria and the Lebanon and asked for their withdrawal. After the matter had been discussed by the United Nations, a direct accord was reached between the interested parties as to the date of the withdrawal of these troops.

The text of the Mandate is reproduced here because of its historical interest. —Ed.

[1] Cf. also the Convention between the United States and France, signed at Paris, April 4, 1924. *Rights in Syria and the Lebanon.* Treaty Series No. 695, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1924.—Ed.

57: Davis S-4 (no date)1953 Ml Middle ~~East~~

Lebanon MEI
Syria MDI

L
S.
648

shall further enact measures to facilitate the progressive development of Syria and the Lebanon as independent States. Pending the coming into effect of the organic law, the Government of Syria and the Lebanon shall be conducted in accordance with the spirit of this mandate.

The Mandatory shall, as far as circumstances permit, encourage local autonomy.

Art. 2. The Mandatory may maintain its troops in the said territory for its defence. It shall further be empowered, until the entry into force of the organic law and the re-establishment of public security, to organise such local militia as may be necessary for the defence of the territory, and to employ this militia for defence and also for the maintenance of order. These local forces may only be recruited from the inhabitants of the said territory.

The said militia shall thereafter be under the local authorities, subject to the authority and the control which the Mandatory shall retain over these forces. It shall not be used for purposes other than those above specified save with the consent of the Mandatory.

Nothing shall preclude Syria and the Lebanon from contributing to the cost of the maintenance of the forces of the Mandatory stationed in the territory.

The Mandatory shall at all times possess the right to make use of the ports, railways and means of communication of Syria and the Lebanon for the passage of its troops and of all materials, supplies and fuel.

Art. 3. The Mandatory shall be entrusted with the exclusive control of the foreign relations of Syria and the Lebanon and with the right to issue exequaturs to the consuls appointed by foreign Powers. Nationals of Syria and the Lebanon living outside the limits of the territory shall be under the diplomatic and consular protection of the Mandatory.

Art. 4. The Mandatory shall be responsible for seeing that no part of the territory of Syria and the Lebanon is ceded or leased or in any way placed under the control of a foreign Power.

Art. 5. The privileges and immunities of foreigners, including the benefits of consular jurisdiction and protection as formerly enjoyed by Capitulation or usage in the Ottoman Empire, shall not be applicable

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1:53 MI Middle East
Lebanon MEI
Syria MDI
L
S
648

in Syria and the Lebanon. Foreign consular tribunals shall, however, continue to perform their duties until the coming into force of the new legal organisation provided for in Article 6.

Unless the Powers whose nationals enjoyed the afore-mentioned privileges and immunities on August 1st, 1914, shall have previously renounced the right to their re-establishment, or shall have agreed to their non-application during a specified period, these privileges and immunities shall at the expiration of the mandate be immediately re-established in their entirety or with such modifications as may have been agreed upon between the Powers concerned.

Art. 6. The Mandatory shall establish in Syria and the Lebanon, a judicial system which shall assure to natives as well as to foreigners a complete guarantee of their rights.

Respect for the personal status of the various peoples and for their religious interests shall be fully guaranteed. In particular, the control and administration of Wakfs shall be exercised in complete accordance with religious law and the dispositions of the founders.

Art. 7. Pending the conclusion of special extradition agreements, the extradition treaties at present in force between foreign Powers and the Mandatory shall apply within the territory of Syria and the Lebanon.

Art. 8. The Mandatory shall ensure to all complete freedom of conscience and the free exercise of all forms of worship which are consonant with public order and morality. No discrimination of any kind shall be made between the inhabitants of Syria and the Lebanon on the ground of differences in race, religion or language.

The Mandatory shall encourage public instruction, which shall be given through the medium of the native languages in use in the territory of Syria and the Lebanon.

The right of each community to maintain its own schools for the instruction and education of its own members in its own language, while conforming to such educational requirements of a general nature as the administration may impose, shall not be denied or impaired.

Art. 9. The Mandatory shall refrain from all interference in the administration of the Councils of management (Conseils de fabrique) or in the management of religious communities and sacred shrines

57: Davis S-4 (no date)1953 Ml Middle East
Lebanon ME1
Syria MD1
L/S. 648

belonging to the various religions, the immunity of which has been expressly guaranteed.

Art. 10. The supervision exercised by the Mandatory over the religious missions in Syria and the Lebanon shall be limited to the maintenance of public order and good government; the activities of these religious missions shall in no way be restricted, nor shall their members be subjected to any restrictive measures on the ground of nationality, provided that their activities are confined to the domain of religion.

The religious missions may also concern themselves with education and relief, subject to the general right of regulation and control by the Mandatory or of the local government, in regard to education, public instruction and charitable relief.

Art. 11. The Mandatory shall see that there is no discrimination in Syria or the Lebanon against the nationals, including societies and associations, of any State Member of the League of Nations as compared with its own nationals, including societies and associations, or with the nationals of any other foreign State in matters concerning taxation or commerce, the exercise of professions or industries, or navigation, or in the treatment of ships or aircraft. Similarly, there shall be no discrimination in Syria or the Lebanon against goods originating in or destined for any of the said States; there shall be freedom of transit, under equitable conditions, across the said territory.

Subject to the above, the Mandatory may impose or cause to be imposed by the local governments such taxes and Customs duties as it may consider necessary. The Mandatory, or the local governments acting under its advice, may also conclude on grounds of contiguity any special Customs arrangements with an adjoining country.

The Mandatory may take or cause to be taken, subject to the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, such steps as it may think best to ensure the development of the natural resources of the said territory and to safeguard the interests of the local population.

Concessions for the development of these natural resources shall be granted without distinction of nationality between the nationals of all States Members of the League of Nations, but on condition

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 Ml Middle East
Lebanon ME1
Syria MD1

L
,S
6ug

that they do not infringe upon the authority of the local government. Concessions in the nature of a general monopoly shall not be granted. This clause shall in no way limit the right of the Mandatory to create monopolies of a purely fiscal character in the interest of the territory of Syria and the Lebanon, and with a view to assuring to the territory the fiscal resources which would appear best adapted to the local needs, or, in certain cases, with a view to developing the natural resources either directly by the State or through an organisation under its control, provided that this does not involve either directly or indirectly the creation of a monopoly of the natural resources in favour of the Mandatory or its nationals, nor involve any preferential treatment which would be incompatible with the economic, commercial and industrial equality guaranteed above.

Art. 12. The Mandatory shall adhere, on behalf of Syria and the Lebanon, to any general international agreement already existing, or which may be concluded hereafter with the approval of the League of Nations, in respect of the following: the slave trade, the traffic in drugs, the traffic in arms and ammunition, commercial equality, freedom of transit and navigation, aerial navigation, postal, telegraphic or wireless communications, and measures for the protection of literature, art or industries.

Art. 13. The Mandatory shall secure the adhesion of Syria and the Lebanon, so far as social, religious and other conditions permit, to such measures of common utility as may be adopted by the League of Nations for preventing and combating disease, including diseases of animals and plants.

Art. 14. The Mandatory shall draw up and put into force within twelve months from this date a law of antiquities in conformity with the following provisions. This law shall ensure equality of treatment in the matter of excavations and archaeological research to the nationals of all States Members of the League of Nations.

(1) "Antiquity" means any construction or any product of human activity earlier than the year 1700 A.D.

(2) The law for the protection of antiquities shall proceed by encouragement rather than by threat.

Any person who, having discovered an antiquity without being furnished with the authorisation referred to in paragraph 5, reports

57: Davis S-4 (no date)1953 Ml Middle East
Lebanon MEI
Syria MDI
L
S-
648

the same to an official of the competent Department, shall be rewarded according to the value of the discovery.

(3) No antiquity may be disposed of except to the competent Department, unless this Department renounces the acquisition of any such antiquity.

No antiquity may leave the country without an export licence from the said Department.

(4) Any person who maliciously or negligently destroys or damages an antiquity shall be liable to a penalty to be fixed.

(5) No clearing of ground or digging with the object of finding antiquities shall be permitted, under penalty of fine, except to persons authorised by the competent Department.

(6) Equitable terms shall be fixed for expropriation, temporary or permanent, of lands which might be of historical or archaeological interest.

(7) Authorisation to excavate shall only be granted to persons who show sufficient guarantees of archaeological experience. The Mandatory shall not, in granting these authorisations, act in such a way as to exclude scholars of any nation without good grounds.

(8) The proceeds of excavations may be divided between the excavator and the competent Department in a proportion fixed by that Department. If division seems impossible for scientific reasons, the excavator shall receive a fair indemnity in lieu of a part of the find.

Art. 15. Upon the coming into force of the organic law referred to in Article 1, an arrangement shall be made between the Mandatory and the local governments for reimbursement by the latter of all expenses incurred by the Mandatory in organising the administration, developing local resources, and carrying out permanent public works, of which the country retains the benefit. Such arrangement shall be communicated to the Council of the League of Nations.

Art. 16. French and Arabic shall be the official languages of Syria and the Lebanon.

Art. 17. The Mandatory shall make to the Council of the League of Nations an annual report to the satisfaction of the Council as to the measures taken during the year to carry out the provisions of this mandate. Copies of all laws and regulations promulgated during the year shall be attached to the said report.

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 Ml Middle East

Lebanon MEI
Syria MD1

L
.S

648

Art. 18. The consent of the Council of the League of Nations is required for any modification of the terms of this mandate.

Art. 19. On the termination of the mandate, the Council of the League of Nations shall use its influence to safeguard for the future the fulfilment by the Government of Syria and the Lebanon of financial obligations, including pensions and allowances, regularly assumed by the administration of Syria or of the Lebanon during the period of the mandate.

Art. 20. The Mandatory agrees that if any dispute whatever should arise between the Mandatory and another Member of the League of Nations relating to the interpretation or the application of the provisions of the mandate, such dispute, if it cannot be settled by negotiation, shall be submitted to the Permanent Court of International Justice provided for by Article 14 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

The present instrument shall be deposited in original in the archives of the League of Nations and certified copies shall be forwarded by the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to all Members of the League.

Done at London on the twenty-fourth of July, 1922.

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 Ml Middle East

LEBANON MEI

Syria MD1

~~323.~~

AN ACCORD BRINGING ABOUT THE END OF HOSTILITIES IN SYRIA AND LEBANON[1]

ANGLO-FRENCH AGREEMENT ON SYRIA

JULY 15, 1941

L 648

S 648

I. General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, G.B.E., K.C.B., D.S.O., commander in chief of the Allied forces in Palestine and Syria, acting in the name of the commander in chief of the Middle East for the first part; and

General de Verdilhac, Legion of Honor, assistant to the commander in chief of the troops of the Levant, acting in the name of the French high command for the second part, have reached an agreement bringing about the end of hostilities in Syria and Lebanon, by which the hostilities stopped July 11, 1941, at 9:01 p.m. (Greenwich mean time).

II. The Allied forces will occupy the Syrian and Lebanon territories. The French forces will be concentrated in certain zones fixed by the committee composed of representatives of the two parties. This concentration should be achieved by Tuesday, July 15, 1941, at the noon hour, at which the Allied forces will move toward the occupation of certain strategic points.

Until their repatriation the French troops will remain with reduced officer personnel under the French command, which will see after their supply and with that purpose keep the existing quartermaster stocks. Special dispositions are foreseen for the Jebel el Druz, where for reasons of security French troops will stay in their garrisons until relieved by British troops.

III. In order to insure the public security, the occupation of the principal Syrian and Lebanese localities will be carried out according to a program which will permit the immediate replacement of the French forces by the occupying forces.

IV. Sea and land mine fields will be disclosed to the occupying authorities.

---

[1] English text in New York *Herald Tribune*, July 16, 1941.

64: Shwadran S-4 (no date) 1955 Ml Middle East

Jordan M61
Syria M01

J 471 648 £80,000; royalty was to be 4 shillings (gold) per ton. The concession could not be cancelled for ten years unless the Company was released by the Transjordan Government.[24] In April 1948, just prior to the expiration of the Palestine Mandate, the High Commissioner for Palestine granted the Transjordan Petroleum Company free passage through Palestine to the Mediterranean for any oil discovered in Transjordan.[25] In the middle of 1954 the Company decided to give up its concession and it began to negotiate with the Jordan Government for release; in November the Government signed an agreement with the Company to terminate the concession. The agreement provided for a final payment of £400,000, bringing the total amount paid by the Company since it was granted its concession in 1947 to £717,000.[26]

Syria

S PIPELINES

471 648 The I.P.C. pipeline from Iraq to the Mediterranean, built in the early 'thirties, ran about 267 miles in Syria, and as in the case of Palestine and Transjordan, the agreement signed in 1931 between the Government of Syria and the I.P.C. provided for no payment for transit rights. After the war, when Syria emerged as an independent country, her Premier, Jamil Mardam, announced in Damascus in the middle of May 1947 that the I.P.C. had agreed to pay the Syrian Government LS 750,000 annually (about $336,000) for the right of passage and protection of the pipeline.[27] This was increased in 1950 to £108,000.[28] The 1949 agreement between Syria and Tapline is outlined above.[29]

---

[24] Longrigg, *Oil in the Middle East*, 250; *The New York Times*, May 13, 1947.

[25] This was later repudiated by the Israel Government. For an official British summary of the various concessions granted by the British Administration in Palestine and Transjordan, see Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine Prepared in December 1945 and January 1946 for the Information of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry*, II, 969-972.

[26] *Middle Eastern Affairs*, V, 408, Dec., 1954. Some American experts did not share the pessimistic view of the I.P.C. about oil possibilities in Jordan. See, for instance, L. S. Gardner, "Oil Possibilities in The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," *The Oil Forum*, VIII, 448-450, 454, November, 1954.

[27] *The New York Times*, May 13, 1947.

[28] Longrigg, *Oil in the Middle East*, 243. Actually it was no increase, only an adjustment for the devaluation of the £.

[29] See above, Chap. XIII.

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East

LEBANON ME1
SYRIA MD1

S L 175 ed a governor for Lebanon before the latter was displaced by the French (whose historic interests in Lebanon had been recognized by the British Government in the correspondence with the Sharif Hussain). While Faisal and Lawrence were presenting the Arab case to the Paris Peace Conference, the French were consolidating their military hold on the Levant. Eventually Faisal and Clemenceau came to a provisional agreement for an autonomous Syrian state under the tutelage of France (as conceded by Britain in the secret Sykes–Picot Agreement of 1916, which had not been communicated at the time to the Sharif and his sons); but French tutelage was not acceptable to the Damascus politicians who in March 1920 proclaimed Faisal King of an independent Syrian state. In the following month, however, the French obtained Britain's agreement, at the San Remo Conference, to their exercising a Mandate over Syria as well as Lebanon; the new Mandatary defeated Faisal's little army at Maisalun on 25 July 1920 and entered into possession of Damascus, from which Faisal fled into exile.

S L 648 ●

The French Mandate, 1920–45

Since Crusader times, France had been interested in protecting the Christians of the Levant, and the twentieth century gave her the added incentive of creating a counter-balance to Britain's growing influence in the Middle East. The Maronites welcomed the French, and the latter accordingly expanded the small area of the Sanjaq of Lebanon to include the cities of Beirut, Tripoli, and Sidon, as well as the Biqaa, so as to give this 'Greater Lebanon' the largest possible area in which there would be no danger of a Muslim majority. The French applied to Syria the principle of *divide et impera* and four separate states were set up: that of the Alawis (Jebel Ansariya, including Latakia), that of the Jebel Druze, and Damascus and Aleppo (in 1925 combined into a single state of Syria). The French further encouraged separatism in the Jezira, and designated the area of Antioch and Alexandretta (in which the largest linguistic community was the Turkish) as an autonomous sanjaq.

S L 648 669 The majority of Syrians never readily accepted French rule and risings occurred in the Ansariya, near Aleppo, and near Dair az-Zor; these were soon put down but a greater rebellion began in the Jebel Druze in 1925 and spread to Damascus and to Hama. The French bombarded Damascus in October 1925 and in May 1926 but did not succeed in completely quelling the revolt until August 1927. Thereafter negotiations for a treaty stumbled through the years, punctuated by disturbances, broken off from time to time and marked throughout by bitter-

63:Simmons et al G-5 (1941-1951) 1954
M1 Middle East
SYRIA MD1

6

Syria

GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

The Republic of Syria was constituted in 642
1943, when France relinquished control over
the mandated territories of Lebanon and
Syria. Geographically and ethnically Syria 131
forms an integral part of the eastern Medi- 646
terranean region, but politically it has un-
dergone progressive modification since the
dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire
following World War I. Considerable confu- 101
sion in terminology arises from the fact that 649
the entire area was then designated as
Syria. It was mandated to France by the
League of Nations in 1923 as the separate
territories of Syria and Lebanon. Subse-
quently, for a brief period the region was di-
vided into the autonomous "Levant States"
of Lebanon, Syria, Latakia and Jebel ed
Druz. With the annexation of Latakia and
Jebel ed Druz as provincial units in 1936,
and the cession of the Alexandretta district
to Turkey in 1939, the present boundaries
of Syria were established. The country now 131
includes an area of approximately 71,000
square miles. In the west, it has a coastline
of about 104 miles on the Mediterranean
Sea and, to the south, common frontiers
with Lebanon and northern Israel. Inland,
it is surrounded by Turkey on the north,
Iraq on the east and the southeast, and
Jordan on the south.

The interior of the country is essentially 133
a semiarid plateau, sloping to the basins of the Euphrates and the Tigris, and backed by chains of mountains in the north and the west. The highlands on the Turkish border are not well defined, but those in the west differentiate distinct geographic regions. In the north, the Nusairiyeh mountains, with elevations up to 5,000 feet,

p. 135(A)

747 The Red Crescent Society carries on a campaign against tuberculosis throughout the country, and operates a tuberculosis dispensary in Damascus. The Goutte de Lait Society of Damascus supports infant welfare services in association with the government's maternal and child health center.

The Near East Foundation initiated a comprehensive rural demonstration program in villages near Damascus in 1946, in conjunction with the Ministries of Agriculture, Education and Health. In addition to activities for the improvement of agriculture, it operates 5 child health centers, each serving 10 to 20 villages. Courses are conducted at the largest center for the training of local village midwives in improved technics of midwifery. When the program was expanded in 1951, the Foundation planned for the development of co-ordinated maternity and child health services, including well-child clinics and home visiting, in the village centers and the organization of a special course for the training of rural sanitarians.
747
744 Since 1949, it has participated with the government health authorities and the successive agencies working for the relief of the Palestinian refugees in a malaria control program, based on residual spraying with DDT preparations, or Gammexane, in villages in the Damascus region. In 1950, it co-operated with the Ministry and the Trans-Arabian Pipeline Company in residual spraying operations in villages and refugee camps around Der'a, in Hauran *muhafazat*.

747
648 Hospitals and related health work are conducted by various mission societies in Damascus, Aleppo and Deir ez Zor. Health and medical care services are also provided by the larger industries for the benefit of their employees. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency carries on public health and medical programs in the refugee centers in southern and western Syria.

MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS

743 **Hospitals and Dispensaries.** In 1951,

p. 146(b)

of the babies treated at the maternity and child health center in Damascus suffer from intestinal infections. Epidemics of diarrheal disease often coincide with the ripening of the apricot crop. The ready contamination of this thin-skinned fruit by flies and other insects accounts for the local designation of the early summer diarrheas in the fruit-growing districts as *mish mish* (apricot) disease. 164 164 262

Cholera. Serious outbreaks have accompanied the introduction of cholera in the past, but the disease was absent from Syria from 1928 to 1947, shortly after the epidemic in Egypt. On December 19, 1947, cholera was reported from 2 adjacent villages in the province of Hauran, on the road from Palestine to Damascus. At the same time, cases occurred in 3 villages in the irrigated plain of the Al Ghouta, within 3 or 4 miles of Damascus. Although 45 cases, with 18 deaths, were reported officially, it was generally believed that the actual incidence totaled at least 77 cases. 164

Quarantine measures were promptly imposed in Hauran and Damascus provinces, and all persons entering or leaving those regions were required to possess certificates of immunization against cholera. Over one and one half million individuals were inoculated with cholera vaccine in the vicinity of Damascus, as well as in the affected districts of Hauran and in the city of Aleppo. Supplies and assistance were furnished the Ministry of Health by the World Health Organization, the Near East Foundation and the Egyptian and Lebanese governments. Vaccine was also provided jointly by the Arabian American Oil Company and Trans-Arabian Pipeline Company. No cases were reported after the initial outbreaks, and on January 17, 1948, Syria was declared free from the disease. The exact origin of the epidemic was never definitely established. 744 164 645 947

Helminthiases. ANCYLOSTOMIASIS. Hookworm infection, caused by *Ancylostoma duodenale*, is prevalent among the agricultural workers in foci along the banks of the 164 463 369

p. 149(B)

65:Landshut S-4 (no date)1950 M1 Middle East
Syria MDI

being compelled, in November, 1945, to take part in the demonstrations 563
against the Balfour Declaration, and Jewish shopkeepers being ordered 648
to close their shops as a sign of solidarity with the Muslims. However little concerned Syrian Jewry may have been with Zionist aspirations in Palestine, its feelings on the subject could hardly have been strong enough to cause its leaders—"of their own free will"—to announce that they intended to hold a banquet in honour of the notorious Fawzi Kaukji—a wartime officer of the German Waffen S.S.

Not even in Egypt did public hysteria against the helpless and isolated Jewish minority go to such lengths as it did in Syria. Doubtless this fact is due to the combination of a half-educated university youth and an illiterate, hungry, and disease-ridden urban populace. In Syria, as in Egypt, such a combination has given an extraordinarily explosive character to the nationalist movement.

When the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on the Palestine 648
issue visited Syria, its members were struck by the cowed and 563
intimidated manner of the heads of the Jewish community. One member of the committee, Mr. Bartley Crum, in his book *Behind the Silken Curtain* (p. 239), gives the following description of the scene when three representatives of the Jewish community arrived to give evidence:

> The committee of three chosen Jews appeared. Only one spoke. There had been testimony in Jerusalem before us by Oriental Jews charging that Jews in the Oriental countries were given only second-class citizenship. Our sub-committee expected the Jewish spokesman they now heard on the scene to need far more than 20 minutes to tell his story. Instead, he used 45 seconds of his allotted time. He raced through a one-sentence written statement, in which he said that the Jews of Syria were happy and not discriminated against; that their situation was excellent under the present Syrian Government; and that they had absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with Zionism. The three presented a picture of terrified men. . . .

The tragic farce of the repeated declarations of solidarity with the Muslims forced on the leaders of the Jewish community did not diminish the flood of persecution. Thus Shukri al-Quwatli, the President of the Syrian Republic, made no effort to halt anti-Jewish discrimination, even though in 1946 a Jewish delegation made special representations to him. On the contrary, in 1947, the Syrian Government promulgated new restrictions, prohibiting Jewish inhabitants from leaving their areas of residence.

The effect of this order was to paralyse even what remained of Jewish economic activity; and it should be noted that the order appeared even before the partition of Palestine was decided on by the United Nations.

Within four days of the United Nations decision being made 648
public, the mob was sufficiently worked up for anti-Jewish rioting to 563
break out in Aleppo. On December 2, 1947, a crowd, spurred on 579
by agitators, burnt down the four big synagogues in the city plus

65:Landshut S-4 (no date)1950 M1 Middle East
Syria MDI

648 14 smaller ones, and destroyed 150 houses. An unknown number of
563 Jews was butchered to death.

579 By the time Palestine was invaded by the Arab States, the Jewish communities in Syria were completely isolated. No Jew dared to have any contacts abroad or, for that matter, with any foreigners resident in the country. Commercial activity came practically to a standstill, since Jews were forbidden to open their shops or to carry on with their employment.

The property of a transport company, owned by an Iraqi Jew, was confiscated, and the entire Jewish staff arrested. Fifteen Jewish girls who worked in the telephone exchanges in Aleppo and Damascus were dismissed. The Chief Engineer of Damascus, who had held this position for 12 years, suffered the same fate, together with five Jewish school teachers. The school building of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* in Damascus was requisitioned for the military. The already impoverished community was forced under threat to donate about £S10,000 (at that time equivalent to £1,100) to the Arab funds.

Throughout the months of fighting, a relentless campaign demanding the confiscation of all Jewish property went on. The Damascus Jews felt themselves fortunate in being spared a repetition of the earlier Aleppo riots, though in August, 1949, 11 were killed when a bomb was thrown into a synagogue.

563 For some time the situation of the Jews in Damascus was extremely grave. Being prevented from earning a living, the community was so impoverished that it was feared that many would die of hunger and disease. Had it not been for the assistance of the Jewish community in Beirut, the Damascus community might well have perished. Later, their straits were further relieved by American help.

563 With the overthrow of the Syrian Government by Husni Zaim in
669 March, 1949, all restrictions on the movements of Jews, as well as on the sale of property, were abolished. The new ruler declared that he would deal severely with any person attempting to discriminate against the Jews. The lifting of the travel ban was immediately followed
[167] by a new wave of Jewish emigration to Lebanon.

The confused situation arising out of Zaim's murder, and the succession of political *coups* which followed, make the prospects of the Jewish community uncertain. But even if the new Government were to abstain from any official discrimination against the Jews of Syria, the atmosphere has been poisoned to such an extent that a return to normal conditions and peaceful relations seems most unlikely. On the face of it, nothing will alter the passionate wish of practically every Jew in Syria to shake the country's dust off his feet.